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ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE IN ARNHEM LAND*

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* The expeditions in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia, on which this work was carried out, were undertaken in 1935-6-7, under commission by the Commonwealth Government, and in 1941-2-3, while on war service, in command of the Special Reconnaissance Unit, and the Northern Territory Coastal Patrol. During this period the writer lived for more than four years with the people of Arnhem Land.

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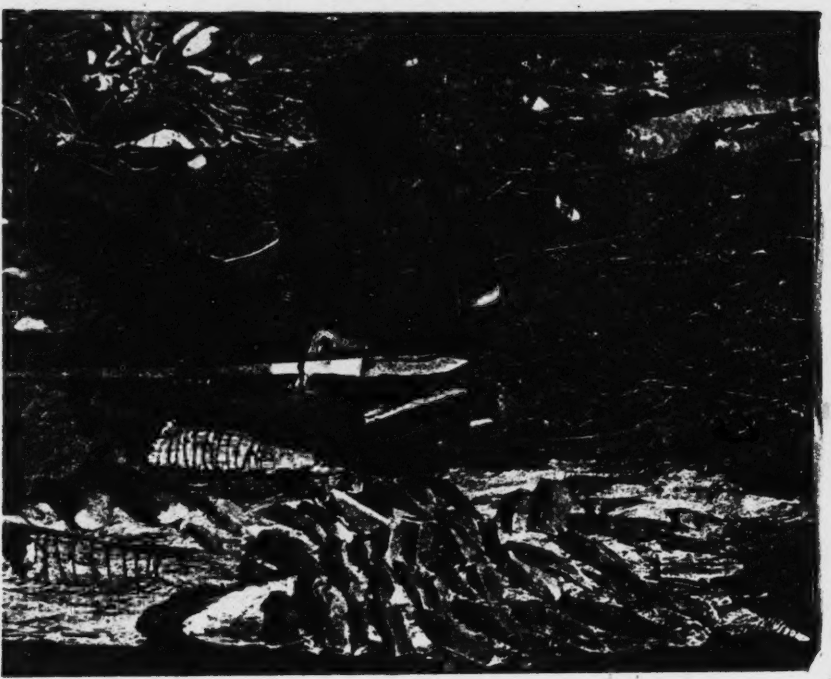

Plate 1. A craftsman at ŋillipidji, the far-famed stone spear quarry in the hinterland of Blue Mud Bay, examining flint spear heads called *ŋāmbi.* These spear heads are encased in a special sheath of paperbark (*Melaleuca*) to which the name *djalk* is applied, which gives its name to *kumur djalk*, the quarter in the ceremonial exchange cycle from which most of these fine spear heads enter North and Central Arnhem Land. On the left are two bundles each containing about a dozen *ŋāmbi*, neatly wrapped in paperbark, ready for transport inland for *wetj*, as goodwill presents for partners within the ceremonial exchange cycle. The smooth stone implements on the left are the hammer stones used by the spear maker to strike off flakes from a core of flint dug out of the quarry.

[facing p. iii]

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ECONOMIC STRUCTURE
AND THE
CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE
IN
ARNHEM LAND

BY

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[p. iv]

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CONTENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION 1
2. SOCIAL ORGANISATION, OWNERSHIP OF LAND, ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND THE ORGANISATION OF WORK 8
3. CONCEPTION OF WEALTH, THE GIVING OF PRESENTS AND THE IDEA OF "PAYMENT" 46
4. CRAFT SPECIALISATION 56
5. THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE IN ARNHEM LAND 61
6. INFLUENCE OF INDONESIAN CULTURE ON THE IDEA OF WEALTH AND THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE 82
GLOSSARY 95
INDEX 99

PLATES

1. A CRAFTSMAN AT ŊILLIPIDJI *Frontispiece*
After page
2. A MAN OF BLUE MUD BAY WITH HIS WIVES AND CHILDREN 42
3. CEREMONIAL DEDICATION OF ŊÄTU 42
4. FLINT QUARRY AT ŊILLIPIDJI 58
5. REPLICA OF SQUARE-FACED BOTTLE ELEVATED TO THE LEVEL OF A CEREMONIAL TOTEM 58
6. WONGO WITH HIS DRAWING OF A MACASSAR PRAU 58
7. HUNTER WITH KANGAROO 58
8. COMMUNAL FISHING DRIVE 58
9. WOMEN GATHERING CORMS 58
10. MAN MAKING ROPE 74
11. WOMAN MAKING NET BASKET 74

MAPS

000 Fig. 1. Map of Arnhem Land showing the area covered by the Ceremonial Exchange Cycle *At end of book*
Fig. 2. Map of Arnhem Land illustrating some of the characteristic *gerri* of each sector, etc. " " "

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My thanks are due to Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown for his advice and criticism and to Professor G. L. Wood, Dean of Faculty of Commerce, University of Melbourne, for help and encouragement in the writing of this monograph.

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D.F.T.

[p. vi]

NOTE

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The following symbols have been used in this monograph:

ä for the sound of the vowel in sun.
ŋ for the sound of ng in singer.

1.

INTRODUCTION

The work of Malinowski[1], Firth[2] and others has done much to dispel the idea which was long prevalent that most native people live in a kind of idyllic "pre-economic" state. Many years ago Malinowski showed that a well-developed economic structure underlies the activities of the people of the Trobriand Islands. He showed that these people possess appropriate ideas of wealth and definite mechanisms for its distribution, as well as a system for the organisation of work and of communal enterprise, including extended trading voyages with the ceremonial background of the *kula*. 121

But the Trobriand Islanders are relatively advanced people compared with the Australian aborigines. No systematic account has yet been published of the economic life and structure of the aborigines, of their ownership of property, their economic exchange[3] or of their ideas of wealth and payment. Nor has any comprehensive account appeared of their systems of land tenure, the development of craft

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[1] Malinowski, B., *Primitive Economics of the Trobriand Islanders*, The Economic Journal, Vol. XXXI, pp. 1-16.

[2] Firth, Raymond, *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori*, London, 1929.

[3] An interesting type of economic exchange on the Daly River, to the west of Darwin, has been described by Dr. W. E. H. Stanner,

12 (specialisation, of the organisation of work or of the "drives" which furnish the motives for the carrying out of work, and especially for the extensive communal enterprises which are a feature of aboriginal life.

It is well known that the aborigines are nomadic, and that they are hunters and collectors, not producers, of food. But is the search for vegetable food, the fishing and hunting, carried out by each individual independently, or by each family as a separate unit, or is there any general organisation of work, co-ordination of enterprise and orderly sharing of proceeds? If there is such organisation, how and by whom is this carried out and by what means are these things regulated? That there is *some* communal effort is at once obvious even to a casual observer. But what is the nature of the drives behind this effort? Are these social or economic?

A close study of the literature on the aborigines gives no really satisfactory answers to these questions. Instead, it has been assumed generally by economists that these people still linger in the hypothetical "pre-economic" stage of development to which I have referred, or even that they live in a state of "primitive communism". By this is implied, appar-

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(Oceania, Vol. IV, 1933-4), which suggests that ceremonial exchange cycles may have been widespread in Australia and that they have been overlooked by field workers.

This belief is supported by the following note, for which I am indebted to Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown: "Cycles of ceremonial exchange existed, I believe, all over Australia. In West Australia the tribes on the Ninety Mile Beach (Karadjeri etc.) acted as middle-man through whom things made in the Kimberley district passed to southern tribes such as the Kariera, and vice-versa. Moreover the Karadjeri were manufacturers of certain distinctive types of weapons etc. and had a distinctive art-style of their own. These Karadjeri manufactures went both northwards and southwards along the coast."

ently, a vague condition of communal ownership of land and wealth, with little idea of "value", of the personal ownership of property, or of the organisation of work. This view finds expression in the average cattleman's idea that the blackfellow is a fool who has no sense of value and who gives away everything, even his clothes, indiscriminately, without any appreciation of their worth. This is very far from true, and is due to failure to understand the kinship obligations of the aborigines. It is true that a native who goes to work for the white man on a cattle station in Northern Australia, and who receives an issue of a pair of trousers, a shirt and a pair of boots, may appear, a day or two later in rags, having in the meantime passed his new clothes to a relation. To the white employer this is incomprehensible, but studied in relation to social organisation and behaviour it appears in a very different light.

The most important factor in the regulation of conduct 601
in Australian society is the kinship organisation. This not 602
only lays down the terms which a man applies to all those persons he normally meets, but it also defines his behaviour to them, as well as their reciprocal obligations.[4] For each 602
kinship term, which is used in place of a personal name, is

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[4] For those who have no special anthropological training the importance of the part played by the kinship organisation in Australian society must be stressed.

Under the "classificatory" system of relationship the use of the terms applied to *own* relatives is extended to many people whom we would not consider relatives at all, and it defines a man's behaviour to these people, according to the terms he applies to them, and in turn fixes their behaviour and obligations to him.

Kinship not only regulates marriage and behaviour, but it provides for the adoption of orphans by people who, under the kinship system, are their sociological (as distinct from physiological) fathers and mothers, to whom they already apply the terms for father or mother and to whom their behaviour has always been a

602 more than a mere term of address, and carries with it a
431 definite pattern of behaviour. It is well known that the giv-
602 ing or exchange of presents establishes or affirms a bond
between individuals. When an aborigine meets a relation of a certain order, for example a person to whom, under the classificatory system, he extends the term brother, he may have an obligation to make a present to him. If it happens that his only available wealth is a shirt or a pair of trousers he will hand these over to discharge his obligation, receiving a gift in return, which may chance to be a ragged shirt or a tattered, worn-out pair of trousers. The important point is that a gift has been exchanged and reciprocal obligations discharged. If one man should happen to be the loser, in the economic sense, this is of little moment. The transaction is in no sense barter or exchange; it is a gift pure and simple, without any assessment of value, and with no deliberate *economic* import, in response to a *social* obligation laid down by the kinship structure into which every man is born. One of the men has given a present to the other. Failure to reciprocate would lay the recipient open to a charge of meanness, and what is even worse, he would lose face, and would in any case remain under an obligation to repay the gift at some future date.

121 The purpose of the present communication is to give an
177 431 account of the basic economic structure and organisation

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[601] modification of the pattern applied to their own actual fathers and
[602] mothers.

The kinship organisation provides also for the old and the sick, who are fed and cared for, not as a charge on the society, but by their own kin, who accept the responsibility without question as part of the pattern of life in which they have grown up. Cruelty or neglect of old people and children is unknown among the people of Arnhem Land.

of the natives of North-eastern Arnhem Land, and to show [121]
how the impact upon these primitive hunting people of a 177
virile culture from Indonesia, which has probably occurred 431
only during the past two hundred years, has stimulated a remarkable ceremonial exchange cycle so that goods were passed far inland from the coast, while others were drawn from places hundreds of miles to the southward. This cycle, though in itself primarily social and not economic, supplies the motive force, the "drive", under cover of which an elaborate system of *ceremonial exchange* has been developed. This in turn furnishes the mechanism for the circulation of wealth or *gerri* (applied collectively to "goods" or "possessions", to material wealth), that would have been restricted, or at least rendered difficult, by the social structure of these people without the influence of the culture from Indonesia.[5]

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[5] The fact that ceremonial exchange systems appear to have been [171]
widespread in Australia has been pointed out (see page 2). But the 619
special type of local organisation which occurred in Arnhem Land, 721
combined with the war-like reputation enjoyed by these people, would have tended to restrict communication. A remarkable feature of the social organisation of Arnhem Land north of a line from Bennet Bay and east of Cape Stewart, is the absence of any tribal organisation. The absence of tribal organisation to provide a basis for a wider solidarity, such as exists in neighbouring territories, has tended, as is shown on pages 9 to 13, to foster an intense internal solidarity within the clan, and within the larger group which consists of an aggregation of clans, called *mälla*; and thus to intensify the opposition with other groups. The effect of this social organisation, which was probably unstable, seems to be reflected in the intense and bitter rivalry and almost constant fighting, which raged among the hordes in far Eastern Arnhem Land, and which was responsible for many deaths. These are not conditions which encourage free intercourse and communication between groups widely separated, and although an extensive ceremonial exchange system undoubtedly existed long before visitors from the

[121] 177 Before discussing the effect of the ceremonial exchange cycle which was greatly stimulated by the impact of this dynamic force—the infiltration of Indonesian culture—upon the relatively simple culture pattern of these people, I shall describe in outline the typical culture of this area. It can be shown that in their own culture pattern, before the impact of Malay or proto-Malay culture, the natives of Arnhem Land already possessed the essential elements of a simple economic structure, with recognition of "value" and "wealth", the beginnings of the development of craft specialisation, mechanisms for the organisation of work and the carrying out of communal enterprises, and very definite ideas about the division of labour.

174 It is not possible to state with certainty when the first contact with the Indonesian visitors commenced, but in 1803 Matthew Flinders[6] learned from the crews of Malay praus whom he met on the north coast, that sixty praus, with a total of 1000 men, all from the Gulf of Boni in the Celebes, were on the coast of Arnhem Land at one time and were engaged in fishing for trepang. Although some of these people informed Flinders that they had visited the coast for the first time only twenty years before, and that they were then among the first of their people to do so,

177 431 619 721 Celebes came to Arnhem Land, it is probable that the *gerri* introduced by these visitors did much to overcome the effects of the segmentary organisation and to infuse life and vitality into the ceremonial exchange cycle which developed on a large scale in this territory. One of the aims of this paper is to show how the impact of this virile Indonesian culture may have overcome the effects of the intensely *segmentary* organisation. This effect of the ceremonial exchange cycle on social organisation is discussed in detail at a later stage in this paper.

[6] Matthew Flinders, *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, Vol. 2, 1814, pp. 228-233.

Matthew Flinders had already recorded evidence which he 174
had found as far south as Vanderlin Island in the Sir Edward Pellew Group on the southern shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, of previous visits by some Asiatic people.

From the general demeanour of the natives of the Gulf of Carpentaria, as recorded by Flinders in the narrative of his voyages, it is highly probable that praus from Indonesia had visited Arnhem Land, at least sporadically, for a very long time, much longer than the statement made to Flinders would suggest. But even on the information which he recorded, we know that regular voyages to Australia occurred at least as far back as about 1780.

The Australian aborigines are extremely conservative, 177
and before absorbing any important element of culture, 181
social or material, they generally give it a place in their myth pattern and bring it within the totemic scheme. This provides a background in tradition and so gives a charter for its use. The importance of this will be appreciated more readily when the account of the social organisation in Eastern Arnhem Land, which follows on pp. 8-13, has been read.

2.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

OWNERSHIP OF LAND, ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND THE ORGANISATION OF WORK

000 To an economist who has studied Malinowski's account of economic structure and organisation in the Trobriand Islands, and whose ideas of primitive economics are based on this information, the fact must be stressed that there is a vast gap, culturally, between the relatively advanced Papuo-Melanesian people of the community studied by Malinowski and the Australian aborigines.

105
231 The natives of Arnhem Land are a nomadic people who live by hunting and collecting. They have no settled village life, no gardens or agriculture, they know nothing of pottery, and they have no domestic animals other than the half-wild dingo, which serves as boon companion and hunting ally. Although the evidence suggests that the dingo accompanied the aborigines on their journey to Australia, he has never become truly domesticated but has remained a "hanger-on" and has preserved an aloof independence through the centuries.

105 The people have a simple but specialised material culture, and show much skill in technology. Their houses are well-constructed and of several distinct types, each well-adapted to a special environment or seasonal condition, or related to material available. They possess no looms but are expert

in weaving and spinning by hand, and employ a simple spindle for the manufacture of string from opossum fur and human hair. They are skilled as wood carvers and make elaborately-barbed spear heads of wood, carved sacred totemic objects, and grave posts, as well as wooden dugout canoes. They also possess some skill in the working of metal, and make fine iron spear heads by beating out, cold, such unpromising material as odds and ends of scrap metal, rigging screws from ships, heavy metal drums, and even water pipes. In many of these processes the possession of special skill is recognised by the use of a distinctive name, and in their technology there is evidence of the beginning of craft specialisation. 105 [463]

Some account of the social organisation of the natives of Arnhem Land will be necessary in order to understand the economic organisation, food gathering and food preparation, and particularly the division of labour and the distribution of food. 000

The people of Eastern Arnhem Land are organised on a basis of localised totemic clans with patrilineal descent. The bond between members of a clan is descent, or belief in descent, from a common ancestor. Just as the individuals within each clan are believed to be related, so the clans themselves are considered to be linked to one another by the bonds of kinship which once existed among the clan ancestors or culture heroes who were the founders of the clans, thereby establishing a permanent relationship between the groups containing their kin which are believed to be descended from them. 611 614

In at least one respect the social organisation of Arnhem Land, east of Cape Stewart, is atypical. The definite tribal organisation which is a characteristic feature of most other 616 619

616 parts of Australia, is absent. Instead, groups of clans, always [619] of the same moiety,[7] are aggregated more or less closely according to the intensity of the relationship, gauged by the extent of the totemic inheritance from the ancestral culture heroes, which they possess in common.

To these aggregations of clans, the term *mälla*[8] is applied. The important factor in social organisation is the "dual division"—the division into two opposing groups. As stated above, certain clans within the same moiety are aggregated more or less closely into groups according to the in-

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616 [7] An organisation known as the "dual division" occurs throughout Australia and in many parts of the Pacific. It transcends tribal boundaries and cuts through the whole of the social organisation, dividing the clans into two exogamous groups called "moieties".

In Arnhem Land, and in many other parts of Australia, the dual organisation divides all totems between the two moieties. The moieties generally, but not invariably, bear names. In Eastern Arnhem Land these names are *dua* and *yiritja*. There is a well-marked social "opposition" between moieties and the people often have the belief (which can have no sound foundation biologically, since members of the two moieties must intermarry) that members of the two moieties can be distinguished by physical differences, such as skin or eye colour, or the character of the hair, which in one moiety is said to be straight and in the other curly.

[571] [8] *Mälla* is not capable of an exact or scientific definition and may mean nothing more than "a group". It is applied loosely to any group, whether of people or of clans, according to context, but in the sense mentioned here, has a more specific meaning—a group of clans linked by totemism. These groups are not to be regarded in any sense as tribes, but are bound together solely by totemic affinity. They may include within the scope of their solidarity, clans which possess much less cultural and linguistic affinity than those in the opposite moiety. In the absence of tribal organisation in North-eastern Arnhem Land, the opposition between moieties and hence the solidarity of clans within the *mälla*, tends to be emphasised.

tensity of their relationship, gauged by the degree of totemic 616
inheritance. But these groups are certainly not tribes.[9]

The clan, or in practice its occupational group, the horde 614
(*vide infra* p. 12), is the most important unit of social 621
life in Arnhem Land. The clan is the territorial or land- 183
owning group, but the horde is the war-making group, and 626
each horde is to a large extent independent and self-govern- 888
ing. Anything approaching kingship or chieftainship is unknown in Arnhem Land. Law, order and discipline is laid down by tradition. It is defined in the mythology, and in the sagas of the culture heroes, and is maintained by public opinion, enforced by the old men, who act as custodians of the heritage of the clan. The authority of the old men is backed, in turn, by the *wäŋärr*, the totemic ancestors themselves, whose edicts are enforced by the threat of supernatural sanctions.

There is no individual ownership of land. Land owner- 423
ship is vested in the clan as the hereditary group, and as this 614
is a *patrilineal*[10] society, a man is born into his father's clan and has hunting rights over the territory of his own clan and generally over that of several others, particularly that

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[9] The arbitrary use of the term *Murngin*, "tribe", for the people [114]
of Eastern Arnhem Land, which was introduced by Professor W. [619]
Lloyd Warner (*A Black Civilisation*; New York and London, 1937) is particularly unfortunate, for as was pointed out (footnote 5) east of Cape Stewart in North Central Arnhem Land tribal organisation is conspicuous by its absence from the intricate social organisation of the area, although it appears again at Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and occurs along the Roper River. The word *murngin* has nothing to do with social organisation, and is in no sense the name of a "tribe".

[10] Descent, among the aborigines, in family, clan and certain other hereditary groups, is reckoned either in the male line, i.e. through the father, in which case it is called *patrilineal*, or through the mother, when it is called *matrilineal*.

[423] of his mother, which is known by a distinctive term, *yindipulo*,
[614] (*yindi*, big). The mother's clan stands in a special
602 relationship, and a man regards its members as his own
people. In times of trouble or feud, or during the quarrels
about women which rage intermittently, he can be assured
of sanctuary there. (*Yindipulo* applies to the mother's clan
itself, and to members of the clan collectively.) They take
his part in fights and he exercises hunting rights over their
[604] territory as if he belonged to the clan. A special relationship
exists between a man and his mother's brother, called
kauwäl (reciprocal term *wäkku*), who is a member of the
mother's clan. This man is regarded as "like a mother" and
he remains a special friend and ally throughout life.

594 In Arnhem Land the most important unit of social life
614 is the family, the group which consists of a man, his wife
or wives and their children. The family unit however
lies outside the clan organisation, for the clan is a group
whose members are either bound by ties of kinship and
the bond of descent from a common totemic ancestor
or by a belief that they share this bond, and they are
614 also linked by the possession of totems in common. And
621 since the people are patrilineal and the clan group is
exogamous[11]—that is, a man may not marry a woman
of the same clan—the group which actually *occupies* the
clan territory is made up of the male members of the
clan and their children, ***plus*** their wives (who remain
members of other clans—the clans into which they were
born), and ***minus*** those female members of the clan who
have married into other clans. To this occupational group
the name "horde" is applied. The clan is an hereditary
[597] group, entry into which is by birth alone, but a person
may enter a horde by marriage or by adoption. The
clan is a permanent and stable unit of social organisation; the

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[11] See footnote 7 (page 10), on the dual division and exogamy.

horde rests on no such solid foundation and is unstable. 614 621

Membership of each group within this complex segmentary organisation carries its own (often conflicting) solidarity and obligations, which however, form an integral scheme. Obligation and counter-obligation, defined by membership of the clan, and especially by kinship, supplies the incentive to work, to produce wealth and *gerri*, (page 5). Kinship also provides the chief basis for the division of the proceeds of communal enterprise. 602

Before discussing the economic structure in detail, it is 121 necessary to look at the environment, the background, in which the aborigine lives. We must examine the natural resources which are available to him both for the gathering of food and for the manufacture of weapons, implements and utensils, as well as for the building of houses and watercraft. It is necessary to study the methods he has developed for the exploitation of these resources, for the collecting of raw material, for the manufacture of food and the utensils necessary in his domestic economy and activities. It is necessary, also, to examine any mechanisms which he may have developed for the distribution of these goods between individuals within a group, or between groups, and again, in a wider field, to trace the beginning of any system of barter or trade in manufactured objects or commodities, with groups in distant areas.

Does such exchange or trade exist? Is it a regular, (organised) matter or merely casual and sporadic? How is it carried out, and what is the motive force, the incentive, which is required to overcome the difficulties inherent in the "segmentary organisation" which would tend to prevent any extensive form of intercourse between widely separated
groups? We have seen already that the segmentary organi- 571
sation, which divides the people into small groups, each 619
with an intense internal solidarity, also furnishes a basis for

57 *opposition* between groups, which, in the absence of some
619 powerful motive or urge, must tend to restrict communication between people who are situated at any distance from one another.

133 Let us consider, first, the country and its natural resources. Arnhem Land is a vast territory, still in its virgin state. The terrain is rugged. There are no high mountains but only low hills, which, except on the western fringe, rarely exceed four or five hundred feet in height. These hills, which often outcrop with bare rock, give an arid, even desolate, appearance to the country. Undulating lowlands and broad plains
[137] stretch for hundreds of miles. These are more fertile, and are covered either with a dense growth of long grass or with savannah woodland. They are intersected by numerous watercourses, which in the dry season become mere dry ravines with a few deep waterholes. In the wet season these river courses are raging torrents.

813 The natives are familiar with the various botanical (eco-
824 logical) associations which characterise this territory, and distinguish these by special terms. They can name, without hesitation, the characteristic trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants in every association, as well as the food plants and animals, and the raw materials used in technology, which at any season of the year[12] they obtain from each of these associations. In this we see a system and an orderliness

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[12] Some idea of the critical knowledge of their territory and its resources which the Australian aborigines possess, and of the systematic way in which they classify these resources, as well as their appreciation of the influence of the seasonal cycle on their life and economy, may be gathered from the following accounts of the people of the neighbouring territory of Cape York Peninsula:

Names and Naming in the Wiḳ Moŋḳan Tribe (in press) and *The Seasonal Factor in Human Culture*, Proc. Prehist. Soc. July-Dec. 1939, No. 10, pp. 209-221.

which is very far removed from the general picture of the Australian aborigine. 813 824

As the coast is approached, the country often becomes 133 flat, and takes the form of wide plains through which the rivers flow sluggishly. On their estuarine reaches the rivers break up into innumerable arms, creeks and backwaters which are fringed with dense walls of mangroves. These brackish tidal reaches intersect the coastal plains, which are periodically flooded, becoming shallow lagoons which soon dry up, and leave miles of bare mud. This dries out and cracks so that it presents a tessellated appearance, and is often encrusted with deposits of salt. The estuarine 136 reaches, tidal arms, and flood plains, yield very large quantities 226 of food—chief of which are fish, for the capture of which many very specialised methods have been developed in Arnhem Land. Shellfish (*maipal*), including *laitjin,* (the wood-boring shipworm, *Teredo*) are also obtained in quantity in the mangrove zone. The shellfish are gathered at low water and *Teredo* are extracted from sodden logs uncovered at low tide, by splitting these with an axe and pulling them out by hand.

There are two well-defined seasons in Arnhem Land, 132 the wet, or north-west monsoon, and the dry or south-east season. The "wet" extends from about December to March or April, when the wind is generally in the north-west quarter. During this period most of the annual rainfall—about 40 inches—occurs. The "dry" season extends from about April to November. At this season little rain falls except in far North-eastern Arnhem Land and for much of this period the wind blows steadily from the south-east.

This division of the year into two strongly-contrasted 221 seasons has an important influence not only on the food 805 supply of the people but also on their movements and occu- 813

221 pations, and therefore, on the nature of their camps and
805 house types. It may be noted in passing that the seasonal
813 influence on their lives and occupations is well appreciated by the natives themselves, and that they divide the annual cycle into six or more phases or seasons which they name from the winds, the weather conditions, or from the food supplies which characterise them. And again, they will name these phases, and state without hesitation the appropriate occupational sites at each of them, and their activities and food supplies which depend upon these seasonal conditions, with an insight and a precision that no white man who is not a trained ecologist and well versed in botany and zoology, could approach.

[133] During the wet season the river courses rise quickly and
221 soon overflow their banks so that the country is flooded for
[137] miles. The grass, especially on the plains, grows rank and
342 high—often more than six feet—and the people are con-
361 centrated in semi-permanent wet season camps in which the population may exceed one hundred. Here they lead an almost sedentary existence in contrast with their active nomadic life in the south-east season. At this time they construct houses, sometimes of large size—thatched with bark of tea-tree (*Melaleuca*) or of stringybark (*Eucalyptus tetro-*
[352] *donta*). Some of these houses are well built and are provided
[372] with sleeping platforms under which fires can be lighted as a protection against mosquitoes. They are also equipped with racks to carry food and utensils. Each house type has its own traditional form, type of construction and distinctive name, and is often developed in adaptation to a particular environment, or is determined by the building materials available in the vicinity. Nine or ten types of houses or shelters are recognised in Arnhem Land. These vary from simple breakwinds built on the windward side in the "dry"

or south-east season, and "shades" of boughs in the very 221
hot dry weather, to the crescentic and semi-circular houses 342
thatched with teatree bark, and the more elaborate rectangular 361
huts of stringybark which are used in the wet season,
and are of a more or less permanent nature. The large rec- [177]
tangular houses were, however, probably developed or
modified as a result of Malay or Macassar influence.

When the flood waters subside after the storms and rains 221
of the north-west season, the large wet season camps break 361
up into small groups consisting of a few families, which disperse
to lead a nomadic life within the confines of their
own clan territories. Each phase, each season, has its own
related food supply, and this is the chief factor which determines
the daily activities of the people and also the area in
which they are to be found at any time of the year. As the 221
season advances and the grass dries, they practise systematic 224
burning of the country in conjunction with their hunting
activities. This is not a random business; it is well organised,
and is carried out by the men as a communal enterprise,
although in a restricted and controlled manner, with
"drives" for kangaroos, wallabies or other game.

The actual burning of the grass is directed by the old 224
men of the clan, or by others who have an hereditary right, 887
especially by men of other clans who stand, under the kin- 614
ship system, in the relationship of *wäkku* (son, woman 602
speaking; sister's son, man speaking) that is, men to whom
the clan is *yindipulo* (see pp. 11, 12). Such men are necessarily [616]
members of the opposite moiety, and to those unfamiliar
with the people, they may appear to usurp the authority, to
dominate the affairs, of clans to which they do not belong.
But it is part of the traditional behaviour in this area, that 602
certain people of *dua* moiety carry out some of the ritual 614
tasks for members of certain clans of *yiritja* moiety to which 616

602 they stand in a particular relationship, and for *yiritja* to
614 reciprocate for *dua*. The foregoing account applies also to
616 the organisation of most communal enterprises such as
[226] large-scale fishing drives, where the technique is related to local conditions, and therefore has a localised background. In such cases the practice is regarded as traditional, as a part of the pattern or heritage which has been passed to the clan by its founders, the totemic ancestor or ancestors, and which is therefore the special right or privilege of its mem-
[628] bers. Such traditional rights are invariably recognised and respected by other clans and are rigidly enforced, so that any violation may lead to punitive measures and even result in an inter-clan feud. And since the procedure is well understood by all participants, differences or disputes rarely, if ever, arise, and control or authority is not apparent. Most of these enterprises run so smoothly that only those who know the people and understand the social organisation would be aware of the identity of the man in authority.

224 At the conclusion of a hunting "drive" or grass burning
226 operation, or after the completion of a communal fishing
602 expedition, the game or fish is divided equally among those who took part. The group will then often sit down and cook or partially cook the food before taking it back to camp, when it is again sub-divided by each of the people according to his or her own family or kinship obligations.

224 While the burning of the grass yields an appreciable
[136] amount of animal food, of which the most important are kangaroos and wallabies among larger quarry, and such small game as bandicoots, opossums, "goanna" or Monitor lizards (*Varanus*), and snakes—it also has the effect of destroying the tops of food plants, which can then no longer be detected by the women. Burning must, therefore, be

carried out locally and under close control, so that the 224
"grass burn" season conducted by each horde, or hunting
group, is prolonged sufficiently to yield its full food potential over a period of weeks or months, without waste.

By the time the burning of the grass has been completed, 221
another phase in the cycle is reached. The group may now 226
follow the watercourses, which are gradually drying up,
and employ the special fishing methods which tradition
(backed by a long period of trial and error) has established,
as being appropriate to the area and to the season. They 226
secure fish, freshwater tortoises and snakes, by swimming 227
"drives" and by the use of dams, weirs, traps, nets, and 278
special poisons containing chiefly ***rotenone, saponin*** and
tephrosin, which, as the volume of water becomes restricted,
can now be used effectively to stupefy the fish. One of the
most effective of the fish poisons used by these people is [137]
moiyoŋo (*Tephrosia leptoclada*)* a leguminous plant with
a root shaped like a small parsnip. This plant, of which
specimens were examined at Rothamstead Experimental
Station (Herts. England) was found to be highly toxic in
solutions of 1%. Later again, the groups which have been 211
hunting independently during the early south-east season, 361
will converge on the few deep permanent lagoons, where
the camps increase in size as they are augmented by other
groups of people who have been similarly engaged in
nomadic hunting.

At this time the chief food of the natives inland will be 137
ŋätu, the fruit of the Cycad Palm (*Cycas media*), which 262
in this area yields very large quantities of food. In coastal

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*A second species of *Tephrosia* hitherto undescribed, also called *moiyoŋo*, collected during the expeditions in Arnhem Land on which this work was carried out, has since been named *T. Arnhemia* by Mr. C. T. White (Government Botanist, Queensland).

137 zones, *rakai,* the corms of the Tall Spike Rush (*Heleocharis*
262 *sphacelata*), to which reference has already been made,
form the staple food. At the same time, communal fishing
226 drives—almost the only large scale hunting activity in which
476 men and women work together—are organised. Most other
communal enterprises, except those of a ceremonial nature,
are carried out by groups of men or of women working
[887] independently. In most cases the actual procedure follows
[554] so closely a traditional pattern that little actual leadership
[602] is required and this is generally accepted as the responsibility of the most senior and experienced of the older men who stand in the correct kinship status to the group in whose territory the hunting "drive" is carried out. Because these methods are traditional and are therefore regarded as a recapitulation of a pattern laid down by the ancestral culture heroes, the leadership is nominal and generally unobtrusive.

592 Each family—the group consisting of a man and his wife or wives and their young children—lives as a separate unit within the camp. It generally makes its own hut, shelter or breakwind according to the season, but the essential thing is that its life is centred around its own fireside, and that each family group cooks its own food, and lives as an independent and self-contained group within the horde. As a rule only one regular meal is eaten in camp. This is at night after the people have returned from the day's hunting.

591 There is no single women's camp, and up to the time of
593 marriage a girl remains with her parents and shares with
883 her mother the work of gathering vegetable food, and of food preparation, the making of bark houses and the getting of wood and water. But in the case of a boy, after commencement of his first initiation rites, at about the age of puberty, he leaves the fireside of his parents and goes to
live in the single men's camp.

live in the single men's camp. The brother-sister tabu, which 262
is very strict, now comes into operation, and his sisters as 431
well as his mother are prohibited from eating any of the 593
game that he kills and which is now known by a special 602
term, *kälŋboi.* But he still receives vegetable food from 883
his mother and from certain other female relatives which
he reciprocates with gifts of fish, honey or "sugar bag" and
any other food the eating of which is not restricted by
kälŋboi tabus. Later as he acquires status and the tabus
upon the game he kills are removed or relaxed, he will make
regular reciprocal gifts of animal food to his *ŋandi* and to
the other female relatives upon whom, prior to his marriage,
he was dependent for vegetable food.

The division of labour is well-marked. The chief task of 222
the woman, besides the bearing of children, is the collection 462
and preparation of vegetable food and of shellfish, as well as
such small game as rats, bandicoots, opossums and *kuku,*
"sugar bag", the honey of the small black native bee (*Tri-
gona* spp.), as she may glean by the way. Each woman works [594
for her own family group—her husband and children— 602]
but some of the food that she obtains may also be sent to
relatives to whom she has obligations defined by kinship.
Others again may be prohibited from partaking of this 222
food because of their kinship or other status at certain 262
stages of their own or the woman's relationship to the [602]
society. Most of the food obtained by a woman during men- [841]
struation is tabu to certain relatives—particularly to her
brothers. Contrary to the general idea the main food sup-
ply among aborigines, except at certain restricted seasons of
the year, is not animal, but vegetable, and in Arnhem Land
upwards of sixty food plants are known. Some of these
are local and are obtained more or less casually and in
small quantity. But a comparatively small number, which

222 constitute staple foods, are gathered in great bulk, which
262 can be measured in tons, and these plants provide as regular
a harvest of food as cultivated gardens. In Eastern Arnhem
Land the most important of the staple foods are *ŋätu*, the
fruit of a Cycad, two or more species of yam, one, a long
yam called *gulläkku* (*Dioscorea transversa*) and a round
[252] yam *djitama* (*D. sativa*, var. *rotunda* etc.) which possesses
a poisonous property which must be leached out after cooking,
kinipirri (a wild *Taro*), very local in distribution, and
dirrpo, water lilies, (*Nymphaea*) of several species, of which
both seeds and rootstocks are eaten. In the coastal area, by
far the most important staple food from the time the salt
plains dry after the wet until the onset of the rains at the
end of the dry season, is *rakai,* the small round corm of the
Tall Spike Rush, which grows in great quantities, covering
hundreds of acres of ground on the coastal plains, especially
in areas subject to periodic flooding with brackish water.
The corm of this plant is about the size of a hazelnut, and
when eaten raw, has much the same flavour. *Rakai* is also
[252] cooked, and is prepared by roasting in hot ashes, when it
is hammered with a wooden mallet into the form of a small
cake resembling nut-meal of coarse texture.

252 The fruit of the Cycad, *ŋätu*, which was mentioned
above, must be soaked for a period of from three to five
days to leach out soluble poison which it contains. After this
it is ground, moulded into a cake which may weigh several
pounds, wrapped in a neat parcel in paperbark, and cooked
in hot ashes, when it bears a resemblance to a very heavy,
262 coarse, unleavened bread. Vast quantities of *ŋätu* are gathered
in the course of the year. It has the merit that, unlike
[251] most other foods of the aborigines which must be eaten
immediately after preparation, it can be kept for some days
or weeks. The fact that it is very abundant gives *ŋätu* a

special value in native economy, for it enables the women to 262
maintain an adequate food supply on ceremonial occasions
when hundreds of people are gathered in one camp for
weeks or months at a time, who could not otherwise be sup-
ported for such periods on local resources. *ŋätu* is also the
principal food eaten in Arnhem Land on ritual occasions.
After it has been received by the old men it is then dedi- 262
cated ceremonially to the *räŋga*, the sacred totemic object, 778
by the *Dälkärrämirri*, who recites aloud over it the "big"
or sacred names of the totem. It now becomes sacramental
food and may not be eaten or even handled by the profane,
that is, by any but men fully initiated to the particular
totem to which it has been dedicated.

Although, as was stated above, *ŋätu* can be kept, after 251
preparation, for several days, the natives of Arnhem Land,
in common with other Australian aborigines, do not store
food, but are dependent for their subsistence on the result
of each day's hunting. In Arnhem Land a single species of [222]
fruit, *mundjutj*, (*Buchanania Muelleri*), which is harvested
in great quantity in the wet season, chiefly January and Feb-
ruary, is sometimes spread out in the sun to dry until it
becomes wrinkled and shrivelled like a prune. It is then
distinguished by a separate name, *bindjitj*, from the fresh
fruit, *mundjutj*. The method of preparation is as follows:
After a preliminary exposure to the sun the fruit is rubbed
with red ochre and again dried until it is hard and brittle,
after which it is wrapped up neatly in parcels of teatree
bark. In this form *bindjitj* may be stored for weeks or even
months—a practice almost unprecedented among these
nomadic hunting people. The subsequent preparation of 252
bindjitj is carried out by pulverising the dried fruit, includ-
ing the hard seed, with pounding-stones, wetting both fruit

252 and pounding-stone with water during the process. The dried fruit may also be prepared by soaking in water or it may be mixed with the pulverised flesh and bones of the Red Kangaroo, *ķärritjämbäl*, into a kind of paste, in which form it is greatly relished.

251 The only other instance, in my experience, of an attempt by Australian aborigines to store vegetable food, was on Western Cape York Peninsula, where the fruit of the Nonda Plum (*Parinarium Nonda*) was stored in deep holes sunk in dry sand, where it was kept for some time. The desiccated fruit was then prepared in the same way as *Buchanania* was treated in Arnhem Land, by pulverising the fruit, together with the hard stone or kernel, with a pounding-stone and soaking it in water. The two examples quoted above are of considerable interest and are important economically, for they appear to represent the beginnings of the practice among a nomadic hunting and food-gathering people of conserving and storing food.

412 The implements and domestic utensils used by the women are simple but well made, in each case by a technique which is perfectly fitted to the material available. The most important and characteristic implement used throughout most of the Continent is the yam stick. In Northern Australia, this is made from ironwood (*Erythrophloeum Labouchcrii*), varying in length from about three feet to five, or a little more, sharpened at one or both ends, the digging points hardened by fire. This serves both as an implement for [411] digging and as a weapon for the fighting in which women sometimes indulge.

415 Mesh baskets, as well as net or string bags of several types, each adapted to a particular purpose, are carried, and vary according to the chief food in season at the time. These 482 food baskets are slung across the shoulder and suspended

down the back when empty, but when full the weight is 482
usually borne on the forehead, or if the load is a heavy one,
the baskets are carried on top of the head.

At first glance, Arnhem Land, like many other parts of 262
Northern Australia, may appear to be barren and inhos- 824
pitable and to offer little promise for the gathering of 221
vegetable foods. But it must be remembered that over the centuries the aborigines have accumulated great experience of the food plants of their environment, which is handed on from generation to generation, and that they have developed highly specialised methods for exploiting every resource of the territory in which they live. The food resources of Arnhem Land are rich and varied and the natives have developed effective processes for the preparation of its vegetable foods, as well as many clever and ingenious devices for the capture of fish and game.

Again the cooking and preparation of food is far from the 252
crude or haphazard business of popular imagination. *ŋätu* is not the only poisonous plant which is used as food. A number of other food plants also contain soluble poisons which are eliminated by simple and effective, but often prolonged, cooking and washing.

The women are dexterous and neat in all their techno- [462]
logical processes, and to watch them at work in the preparation of vegetable food is an object lesson in the skilful and efficient use of the simplest equipment.

The task of the men is to provide animal food, both fish [462]
and game. As a rule, when a large quarry such as a kan- 224
garoo is killed, it is cooked and quartered on the spot, and 262
is then divided equally among those taking part in the hunt. 602
It is taken back to camp in a cooked or half-cooked state, often wrapped neatly in paperbark. Each man again divides his share of the game according to his obligations defined by

224 kinship, with due regard to certain ritual observances, such
262 as restrictions and tabus. The game may then be warmed
602 on the hot embers, and shared out among those members
of the family who are permitted to eat it, that is, among those
whose status in relation to the social group, in initiation, or
to the man who killed the kangaroo, does not place him or
[778] her under a tabu. The flesh of any kangaroo or other game
which is killed with a spear or other weapon which is
yarḳomirri (lit. "having a name") that is, which has been
dedicated to a sacred clan totem, is also sacred, and may
be eaten only by members of the restricted group comprising
the fully initiated members of the clan. On these occasions
[887 when the food or game is tabu, the division of the quarry
616] is in the hands of the old men of the clan, or more particularly,
the men who apply the term *ŋandi* (mother)—
reciprocal term *wäḳḳu*—to the clan concerned, to whom
it is *yindipulo*. The traditional rights of these men take
precedence even over those of the hunters who killed the
quarry. The men who officiate in these divisions of food or
game, as on most ceremonial occasions, are by kinship
status necessarily members of the opposite moiety.

431 In addition to hunting, and to the elaborate and exacting
462 ceremonial life in which every man plays a part, and which
occupies much of his time, he must make and maintain
his own spears, spear-throwers and fighting weapons. It
will be seen later, that a man may actually acquire some
of his spears and other weapons as gifts by ceremonial
exchange. But as he also incurs an obligation to send spears
[461] to others within this system, such gifts do not actually
relieve him either of the work or the responsibility of spear-making,
but rather give him an incentive, an urge, to work
and to devote the necessary time to the manufacture of fine
weapons in order to maintain his prestige within the
CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE SYSTEM.

ceremonial exchange system. Besides weapons and fishing 462
lines, the heavier types of rope as well as most of the larger
fishing nets, are made by men. In the coastal groups where [501]
bark canoes are used, the making of these craft is also the
work of the men. In the case of dugout canoes, a man
either makes his own canoe, a long and laborious task
taking weeks or months of time and requiring a good deal
of intensive hard work, or he employs a craftsman to make [463]
it for him, in which case he assumes the responsibility for
the organisation of the work and for the payments involved.
The large, coarsely woven fish traps, which may be five or [227]
six feet, or even more, in length, as well as other paraphernalia
associated with fishing, are usually made by the
men, although women may also assist.

How subtle may be the driving force which induces the 221
natives to work, is shown by the following example. During 342
the south-east or dry season the people rarely build houses, 461
but are content with breakwinds, until the north-west or
wet season. Even then they generally delay the work of
gathering bark and other necessary building materials until
the actual onset of the rains. During a patrol at the beginning 461
of the north-west when we were debating as to 787
whether a heavy storm that threatened was really about to 827
break, one of the natives said "*ŋärra tobitj*",[13] "my muscles
have twitched", (and therefore it will not rain). And such
is the belief of the natives in these portents that the people
would not go out and collect the necessary paperbark to
make a proper camp, despite the threatening sky.

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[13] Muscular twitching, called *tobitj*, is an omen or portent which is believed to give warning of a forthcoming event, or to foretell the approach of an enemy or a visitor. The part of the body in which the twitching occurs indicates the relationship in which the visitor stands to the person who receives the warning.

461 Apart from the material for the making of spears and
462 spear-throwers, and the woven baskets for carrying fire-sticks and other possessions, each man gradually collects, incidentally, as he hunts, the raw materials used for cere-
[237] monial purposes, such as the orange-red breast feathers of the Red-collared Lorikeet[14] and the fur of the Brush-tailed Opossum (*Trichosurus vulpecula arnhemensis*). Every man
[431] thus strives to accumulate articles of value, possessions or *gerri* (see page 5), of the appropriate type, which he will send later to relatives of certain orders within the intricate exchange cycle in which he has a place (pp. 67-68). The need to build up a reserve of *gerri* for use within the exchange cycle supplies still another incentive, or urge, to work, and so to be ready to meet these obligations. A man, therefore, must necessarily spend most of his waking time in working. As a craftsman the aborigine is neat, tidy and efficient, but he follows traditional methods and techniques closely, because they form part of the culture pattern into which he is born, and which is for him a heritage from ancestral times.

512 Let us look at the camp of a typical horde of Arnhem Land in the early morning, in order to get some understanding of the way in which these people live, and a picture of the daily routine of hunting and the organisation of work.
[361] The camp is situated generally on high or well-drained ground, and in the dry season is merely a cluster of fires, perhaps with a low breakwind on the windward side, each fire marking the camp of a family, or of a group of single men. In the early south-east season, during the months of

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[14] These rich orange-red feathers of the Red-collared Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus rubritorquis*) are used chiefly by clans of *dua* moiety for the ornamentation of the sacred *räŋga*, and are called *tjuk̠urr*, literally "fat".

May, June and July, when the nights are cold, the natives 512
sleep late and the camp is not active until well after daylight.
As the people wake, they blow or fan the embers which
have been smouldering through the night, and sit around
the fire while they prepare for the day's hunting. No [264]
regular meal is eaten in the morning, but if any food
remains over from the previous night they will warm this
on the fire and eat it, before setting out.

About sunrise the camp is in full activity and the people 224
now begin to move off. If each family is hunting as a 512
separate unit the man picks up his spear-thrower and his [411]
bundle of spears—chiefly hunting weapons, with a fighting
spear or two—and slings over his shoulder a small, closely-
woven basket of the type called *büti mindir*. In this he [415]
carries a bundle of firesticks, and odds and ends of half-
prepared string (*räḵḵi*) in the form known as *duiyarrḵ*
(bast fibre), together with pieces of beeswax and resin—
material used for repairing spears—a knife, or scrapers of
shell, a spear head or two, and generally his smoking pipe.
If there is a young child, the burden of carrying it is 482
shared by both parents. Very young babies are carried by 512
mothers in elongated bark troughs of the same type as those 854
used for carrying water. These are slung over the left 224
shoulder and supported by the arm, leaving the right arm
free to use the digging stick or yam stick. Frequently an
older child is carried by the father astride his neck or
shoulders, and from time to time the parents change over
and relieve one another. Still older children follow behind, 224
or run alongside, sharing the hunting activities of their 512
parents and imitating them in the search for food, learning 857
in this way the technique of hunting and gathering food 868
which they will use throughout their lives.

222 Even when they are making for a definite camping
484 ground, aborigines very rarely travel in a straight line.
Instead, the journey is made slowly, with deviations to
favoured localities which are likely to yield food or game,
so that they can hunt as they go. The women and children
search for vegetable food as they travel, pausing at intervals
to dig yams or other roots, which are put in a "dilly bag"
or basket (*bäti*) carried for the purpose. Meanwhile the
men are on the lookout for sugar bag (wild honey),
opossums, bandicoots (*Isoodon*), native cats (*Dasyurus*),
as well as snakes and goannas (*Varanus*) or any other game
which they can find. On these journeys nothing comes
amiss, and in addition to the quest for food, both men and
women pause to gather any materials of use in technological
[314] processes, which they may see. The young branches of such
[283] trees as *bulgut*, (*Brachychiton paradoxum*), which form
an important source of the fibre used for making string,
are cut, the bast fibre stripped and tied neatly or rolled
up, to be put into their dilly bags for later use. When
a "sugar bag" or wild bees' nest is found the honey and even
the bee bread is eaten on the spot, unless there is a large
[415] amount, when it is carried in a bark trough or a closely
[237] woven basket of special type called *timbuka*. The soft black
wax is roughly moulded into a ball and carried in this form,
to be cleaned and refined later, and used for the mounting
of certain spear heads, particularly for *ŋämbi* and *kaiyit*
(flint and iron respectively).

[221] When the vegetable harvest is at its height, about the
222 middle of the south-east season, and the people are living
512 chiefly on a single staple food which can be harvested
readily in one place, the women generally go out in a body.
[476] But at such times, although they work close together, there
IS NO POOLING OF RESOURCES; EACH COLLECTS
FOOD INDEPENDENTLY, WORKING FOR HER
OWN FAMILY OR FAMILY GROUP.

is no pooling of resources; each collects food independently, 222
working for her own family or family group. And again, 512
as they travel, the women gather any materials they chance
to find which may be of use later, in technology. In this 222
way the people accumulate a reserve of string, fibre, (in 237
various stages of manufacture), resin, bone for making of 314
yam knives and awls, for domestic use, or for canoe and 512
bark trough manufacture, and all the materials regularly
used in technology. These are carried in the *büti*, generally [482]
in the form of neat parcels wrapped in *bärrukälla*
(*Melaleuca* bark). When the men make a chance visit to [431]
an area famed for its spear woods, pigments, or other [317]
special material, they gather this and carry it in reserve, for
later gift or exchange purposes. Similarly, feathers or down
(*rämmän*) of birds are collected, and *bulnyin*, the fur of
the Brush-tailed Possum, which is valued also for ceremonial purposes, is stripped before the animal is cooked.
The spines (*dimir*) of stingrays are also extracted and all
materials useful for technological and ceremonial purposes
are removed while an animal is being prepared, wrapped
in neat parcels in paperbark and placed in the dilly bag
until required for use. As this material is generally carried 461
by the natives in their baskets when they are hunting, they
are able to make use of any moments of leisure during a
halt, or while food is being cooked, to repair and maintain
implements and utensils.

Certain materials, particularly the fat of *kärritjämbäl* the 237
Red Kangaroo, and of a few other animals, and the fat and [435]
feathers of some birds, chief of which are the Emu, Plain 778
Turkey or Bustard, the Jabiru and Native Companion,
which are difficult to approach, have a high "social value"
and are greatly prized. These materials have a ritual sig-

237 nificance and ***must*** be accumulated by the hunter.[15] This
778 fat, as well as the feathers of the birds mentioned above, are known as ***tjärnbin*** and play an important part in the ceremonies called ***ḳunabibbi*** and ***ŋulmarḳ***. The long bones, bills and some of the flight feathers of these birds are also accumulated and wrapped with paperbark into neat parcels called ***täbarr***.

264 About midday, or at the conclusion of a drive for game
512 or fish, the people look for a suitable place to make a fire and to cook such small game as opossums, bandicoots, native cats, "goanna" or fish, as they may have secured. If they are hungry, some vegetable food may also be cooked, but the principal meal of the day is eaten in the evening
461 after the return to camp. For a couple of hours during the
512 heat of the day the natives rest. But they are rarely idle; even during these halts the men may often be seen squatting before little fires, making or repairing spears or other weapons. The women also take advantage of such respites to work at the string or mesh baskets which they carry rolled up in a half finished state, just as a white woman may take up knitting or other handiwork in moments of leisure.

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[777] [15] Failure to do this would bring "bad luck", a ritual visitation, upon the hunter or on the people. The *tjärnbin*, the name given to the fat and also to certain of the feathers of the mammals and birds which have been mentioned, is believed to carry, in concentrated form, the *marr* or "spiritual power" of the animals. To waste this
[753] *tjärnbin* is to risk a ritual visitation, and if it is held for very long there is a too great concentration of *marr* so that the people will
[751] become sick. To dispel this *marr*, to avert the danger of sickness from it, a ceremony called *ḳunabibbi* must be held in which the fat and the feathers which are called *tjärnbin* are used and the danger
[777] is averted. It may be noted also that failure to cook game which has been killed, such as the flesh of one of the kangaroos, will bring "bad luck" and impair the *tjämbait*, the prowess or "good luck" of the hunter.

Late in the afternoon, generally about sundown, the 512
people will be seen returning to camp from the day's
foraging, the women carrying baskets of food on their heads, [482]
rolls of teatree bark (*Melaleuca*) for sleeping mats or for [513]
use in cooking, and great loads of firewood. On arriving in camp they light the cooking fires and perhaps make another journey for firewood to carry them through the night, and to bring water from a nearby well or lagoon.
If the food to be prepared is of a type which requires much [252]
washing during the preparation they may take it close to water to prepare, bringing it back to camp to cook.

Although men do gather some vegetable food, and 462
women also capture small game, besides shellfish, the division of labour is sharply defined and at once evident. The woman is primarily the provider of vegetable food, collectively, *ŋäta*, the getter of wood and water, the maker of light baskets and the smaller and more finely made nets. The man is the hunter, the provider of animal food, and is responsible for the conduct of large scale drives for fish and game. The making of weapons, heavy implements,
canoes, canoe paddles, heavy fish traps and baskets of [227]
coarse heavy fibre, called *koiyapoi*[10] (fish-for) or *ŋätapoi'* [415]
larr, (*ŋätapoi*, food-for; *larr*, open or coarse in texture), for the carrying of heavy loads of fish and vegetable food, is also the responsibility of men.

The first impression that any stranger must receive in 461
a fully organised group in Eastern Arnhem Land is of industry. He cannot fail to see that everybody, man or woman, works hard, and that the work is well organised
and runs smoothly. And he must also be impressed by the [857]
fact that with the exception of very young children who engage earnestly in play, much of which is imitative and based on the activities of adults, there is no idleness.

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[10] *-poi*, suffix "for".

461 based on the activities of adults, there is no idleness. Even the young men are engaged fully in hunting and fishing activities and work hard, in marked contrast with the conditions in similar groups close to white settlement, where the organisation is breaking down. Neither men nor women are idle for long, and even in camp as they sit around their fires they may be seen to pick up a basket, a fish net, a spear or other weapon, and work at this as they talk, just as they did when they halted at midday to rest and to cook food. Yet there is no feeling of haste, but rather of method, of system and order.

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What are the drives, the incentives, which lie behind all this organisation? Why does it move so smoothly, and what induces these people to work hard, so willingly, without any *apparent* direction, control or authority?

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First and foremost, the organisation is based on the
traditions laid down by the totemic ancestors and handed
down in mythology, in the culture myths which the natives
believe to be a history of their own clan ancestors. This provides a charter for all their activities, it gives them a plan,
a motive, for their lives, which they believe are a recapitulation of the lives of the clan ancestors, who "showed the
[861] way". Each individual is born into this pattern and learns
as a child the part he has to play as a unit in the family and
182 clan. But it is not all impersonal, for as a clan member he
461 fits into the kinship network, in which, although his
602 relationship to all the people in his own and neighbouring
554 clans is laid down when he is born, and his behaviour and
obligations to these people clearly defined, these acquire
a reality, a vital significance, because they are personal and
deal with real people. No member of a well-organised society
would willingly lag behind in his obligations. On the faithful discharge of these, on his ability to hunt, to bring his con-

tribution of food to the group, to make payments, to give 182
and return presents of food and objects of value, depends 461
his reputation as a man, his prestige, his feeling of success 554 [602]
as a human being.

Again, a successful hunter, especially one who has achieved renown in the pursuit of animals that are difficult to kill and which thus acquire a high social value, earns the title of *tjämbait,* while a woman renowned as a food gatherer is *bärtatumoro.* These titles are greatly coveted, and the right to them confers a considerable amount of prestige. If a man is called *tjämbait* to his face he will flush with embarrassment and pleasure, passing it off with a disclaimer, "*ŋärra bordin*", literally, "I am quiet" (non-aggressive), but no man would wish to be stigmatised as *tjämbaitmiru*[17]—without prowess in hunting. It would be an intolerable humiliation, a blow to his pride and prestige, to his sentiments as a successful human being.

I remember often when coming in from the hills after hunting wallaroo and Red Kangaroo, being greeted by a man who would say to me in the curious, stilted, artificial sing-song voice they reserve for these things, "Eh! *Wa'wa tjämbait*!" "Ah! my elder brother *tjämbait*!" "Well done, my brother." That, among a renowned hunting people, who live by the spear, is a proud title.

The kinship pattern is a system of obligations and counter 182
obligations, and even if he is content merely to discharge 431
these to the extent necessary to maintain his prestige, a man 461 [554]
must necessarily work hard. To receive gifts of food and 602
other presents which demand return gifts, and not to
reciprocate, places a man under an obligation, which to a
normal individual is an unbearable blow to his pride.

And these obligations are not confined to members of

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[17] *-miru,* suffix meaning without, lacking.

182 a man's or woman's own horde with whom he or she comes
431 into daily contact. They extend also to members of
461 other hordes and are emphasised strongly on occasions
602 when people from distant groups to whom the kinship
[574] organisation is extended, come as visitors. For a young man, such obligations are intense, and to discharge them he is obliged to keep up an almost continuous stream of presents, which entails constant work.

182 With each successive stage of initiation it is obligatory
431 for him to make gifts to the old men of the clan group into
461 which he is being initiated. This may become very irksome
626 and may even reach a stage when no matter how hard he
561 works he is unable completely to discharge all his obligations, so laying himself open to the fear of reprisals, such as
[754] visitation by *kälka* (sorcerers who kill by the use of magic) or by other agencies. Fear of the use of secret methods of reprisal is a very real one, and provides, for a man, one of the strongest inducements to work, to keep pace with his obligations, and so to give no cause for resentment.

431 In those ceremonies such as the *kunabibbi* and *ŋulmark*
561 which transcend clan and tribal boundaries, and are not
796 restricted to, or regarded as the proprietary right of, a
614 small group such as a clan, but are practised widely through-
778 out the territory, these obligations are less onerous. In others, of the type called *märdai'in*, the initiation ceremonies carried out by each clan or group of clans sharing the same totems, at which its sacred totems are revealed, the burden of the gifts or payments is a heavy one. The internal solidarity of these small groups is intense, and their *märdai'in* or *räŋga*—the secret name for the objects which represent the *mälli*, the "shade" or "spirit" of the totemic ancestors themselves—are jealously guarded. These *räŋga* are very sacred and are regarded as dangerous to the

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uninitiated because they are endowed with a force called 561
marr (*mana*)[18], and large presentations of food and *gerri* are 614
obligatory to all those to whom these *räŋga* have been 778 796
revealed and who thus share in the solidarity of the group.

Such obligations recur at every stage in each initiation, and following upon each ceremony a man must make a big ceremonial presentation of objects of value, *gerri*, such as fine spears, belts of human hair and especially gifts of the type that are appropriate to the geographical quarter (*ḳumur*, page 67), within the ceremonial exchange cycle in which his clan territory lies.

If a man comes from a group some distance away, and 431
the occasion is an important one, a dugout canoe (*lippa* 554
lippa) may be presented. This is a big gift and highly [435]
valued. It is important to realise that there is no attempt to assess the value of these things but rather to create a feeling of goodwill, to leave behind a good impression, which a man knows will enhance his prestige and react in his favour in future transactions. He knows also that he builds up goodwill by a reputation for generosity and that
this in turn may mean that he will be selected as the [796]
recipient of the *wärna*, the armlets of opossum fur string [777]
or *lindiritj* (Loṛikeet's feathers) and other paraphernalia

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[18] *Marr* is a kind of spiritual force or "power" very like the Polynesian concept of *mana,* which underlies social and ceremonial life. It occurs in all sacred objects and is the "force" or "power" which makes them dangerous to the uninitiated or profane and a source of strength and "power" to the fully initiated members of the clan or other organisation. *Marr* is not strength or power, danger or sacredness, alone, although it may be each and any of these things. It is the power which makes a *räŋga,* a totemic object, sacred, which makes a dead body dangerous, and which brings good or bad "luck" in hunting. *Marr* is the force which makes a man *tjämbait,* i.e. successful or "lucky" in the pursuit of game.

431 which are stripped from the *räŋga* and presented to special
554 individuals after the conclusion of the ceremony, and which
[777] carry *marr*, confer prestige on the recipient and bring him
[796] "good luck" (*tjämbait*) in hunting.

431 But in any case, failure to discharge the obligations which
554 he incurs at these times would be unthinkable, for a man
626 believes that he is in a state of danger from *marr* (*mana*),
182 and that ritual visitation will follow if he does not pro-
461 pitiate the group concerned. On this account, and because
he would suffer in prestige by failure to discharge these
obligations, they are not incurred lightly. This was brought
home to me vividly in Arnhem Land when Raiwälla of
Mildjiŋi clan, a man who was with me for years, and who
accompanied me everywhere, asked me not to take him
with me when I was invited to *ŋarra* (*märdai'in*) cere-
monies. He explained, in some distress, that because of his
association with me, he had been invited to attend many
more *ŋarra* than would normally have been the case and was
incurring thereby obligations to make *tadoit* payments
(page 40) of food and *gerri* (material wealth) which he
would not be able to discharge. Although the people knew
that he was far from his own territory and understood his
position, and although they assured him that he need not
make any return presentations, he would not accept this.
If he had done so he would not only have been in danger
from *marr*, which had not been returned with the cere-
monial presentation food or *gerri*, but he would have lost
182 face and been placed in a position of inferiority. The urge,
431 the "drive", furnished by these psychological attitudes in a
554 fully organised aboriginal society are more forceful than any
461 material urge. They far outweigh any desire to gain pos-
sessions and are the most important motive forces behind
much of the hunting, and the organised and sustained work

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which goes on. But while these obligations impose a heavy 431
burden, especially upon a young man who must attend a 461
long series of ceremonies with a vista of payments to be met, 554
the ceremonies in turn confer some benefit upon him, [796]
although this may be indirect. They carry increased social [561]
status and prestige which in turn bring gradual liberation from some of the irksome tabus which influence almost every act of a young man.

Although on these occasions the immediate burden of 182
gathering vegetable food falls on his female relatives, 431
especially upon his mother and sisters, this does not relieve 461
the initiate of his own personal obligations, but rather 561
intensifies them. He must now redouble his efforts in [593]
hunting to enable him in turn to supply his women relations with fish, kangaroo, "sugar bag" or wild honey, in order to retain their goodwill. A man's success as a hunter depends not only on his ability to stalk and his skill with the spear but also on his capacity to make, and to maintain in serviceable condition, his hunting weapons, his fishing lines and nets and sometimes also a canoe. So initiation, especially initiation into the jealously-guarded clan totems (*märdai'in*) of the small groups which characterise the social organisation of North-eastern Arnhem Land, with their intense solidarity and quick resentment,[10] sets up a long train of social obligations—each with a definite economic import—each requiring gift and counter gift, and furnishing the motive for work, the urge for production both of food and *gerri*.

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[10] Just as generous presentations of *gerri* (material wealth) and [578]
ŋäta (food) promote goodwill, so tardiness in the discharge of these [628]
obligations may lead to avenging expeditions and interclan feuds.
A man who is unpopular, or who is notorious for his carelessness in [626]
these matters is more likely to be named as the victim when a scapegoat is sought to avenge a death or wrong.

431 Payments or gifts such as those made by a young man under these conditions are known as *tadoit*, (*ta*, mouth, *doit*, signifying return, turn around, turn back), and they occur on many occasions apart from initiation, in each of which, however, the obligations are similar.

765 Mourning and funeral rites among these people are
784 extremely prolonged and are surrounded by many tabus
and intricate patterns of obligatory conduct. The group
which handles the bones of the dead, which may be carried
for some years after they are removed from the ground
soon after the initial burial, are called *ḳoŋ wuḳundi*, lit.
"hands tabu", and these people are placed temporarily
outside the normal social life of their hordes. Members of
such groups, which stand in a special relation to society,
[182] remain in the camp, but they live apart, and this is stressed
[252] by the fact that they maintain separate fires at which they
cook their own food, apart. But the tabu is not absolute
and others within the camp will occasionally take something, such as a firebrand to start another fire, from this
[431] *wuḳundi* (tabu) place. If this should occur the people who
take the fire will send back a small present of food in
return. This again is called *tadoit* (*vide infra*). If they should
omit to make this present they are in danger, after having
eaten food cooked at the *wuḳundi* fire, because they have
shared in the solidarity of a group, members of which are
linked by the bond of their special relationship with the
deceased and so are set apart temporarily from the normal
social life of the horde.

431 The bones of the dead are handled at intervals during
765 the prolonged mortuary rites, and each time this occurs,
182 the small group on whom falls the obligation of doing it,
makes presentations called *ḳoŋ doit* and *ta doit*. The

first phrase means "return from hands", i.e. from handling 431
the bones, the second "return from mouth". Payments in 764
each case are made to the other near relatives. This is a 182
ritual act and may be interpreted as a token "payment" or
gesture in formal expiation of an infringement of the
solidarity (the *marr*) of a group, members of which are
bound together by the sharing of a special bond.

In the case of the ceremonial revelation of the jealously- 182
guarded sacred totemic objects of the clans, with their 431
intense solidarity, it was pointed out that the reciprocal 796
gifts required are substantial and exacting, and I have 778
shown that a considerable amount of organisation is
required to enable a man to discharge these obligations.

But it must be remembered that there is also another side
to these transactions to which reference has already been
made, and that a man not only gains greatly in prestige [554]
and social status, and increases the scope of the ceremonial
exchange cycle in which every individual of standing plays a
part, but above all, the *marr* or "spiritual power" from the
successful conduct of these reacts directly upon all his other
activities. It assists him in hunting and brings him "good [777]
luck" (*tjämbait*) and as has been stated, it adds to his prestige, his social status.

A graphic illustration of the belief in the spiritual power 777
which reposes in the sacred *räŋga*, occurred while I was 778
living with these people. Immediately after the revelation 796
of the *räŋga*, a ceremony associated with the sun totem
of a clan called Maräŋo, a young man went out turtle
hunting in his canoe, and returned with four turtles. The
old men credited the success of the expedition to "good
luck" (*tjämbait*) and claimed that the "body", really the
"skin" (*ķülŋa*) of the young man was still covered with

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[facing p.42]

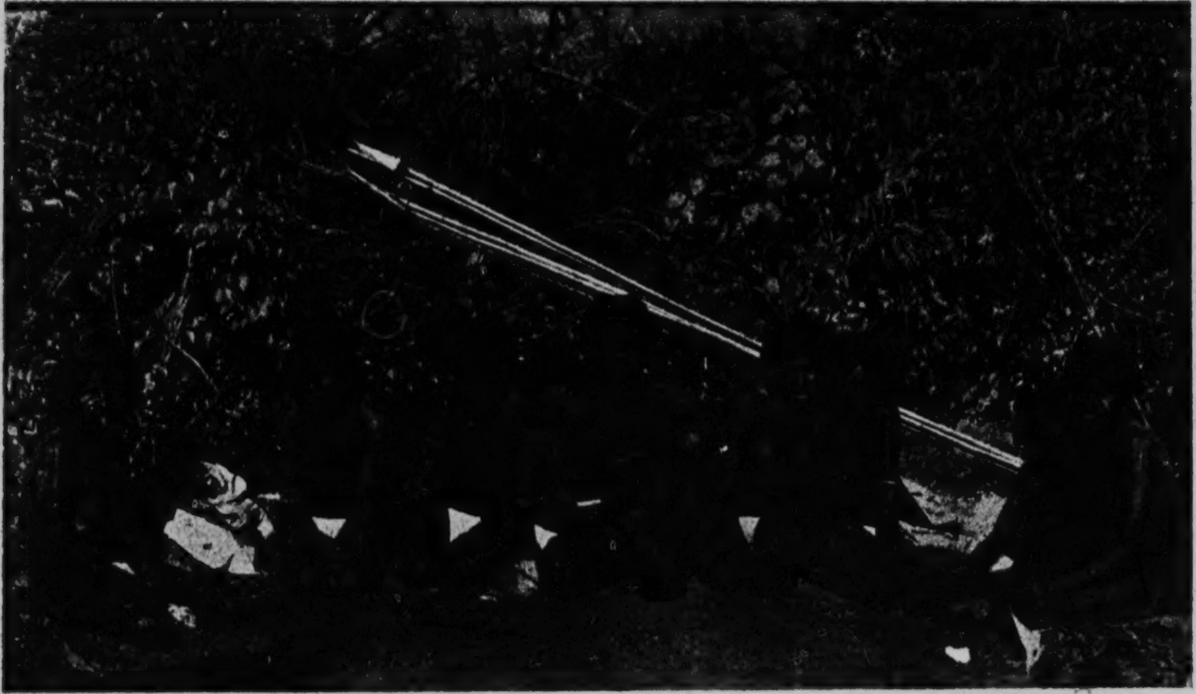

Plate 2. The family is the unit of social life and lives a more or less independent existence within the horde. A man of Blue Mud Bay with his wives and young children. The breakwind of boughs is the only form of shelter used at night during most of the dry season.

777 the fine powdery dust (*ḳänno*),[20] of the ceremonial ground,
778 and declared that the turtles were therefore "*yarḳomirri*"
[796] (lit. "bearing a name", i.e. sacred). A rite was performed to
remove the tabu, before the flesh could be eaten by the
[431] uninitiated. Even then those people, other than members
of the totemic group, who ate the flesh, were called upon
to make a payment of the type previously described, called
tadoit, in this case to the fully initiated members.

182 Reference has been made to the obligation to hunt which
[461] a man incurs in order to provide animal food for the
431 women upon whom he must depend for the large quan-
[561] tities of food which he requires to meet the periodic
[796] ceremonial presentations which mark almost every stage
606 of initiation as well as the termination of each critical stage
604 in his life. This obligation is especially stressed in his
relationship with his *n̄uḳul rumaro*[21] (potential mother-

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[20] *Känno* is really ash, fine, white, powdery wood ash. This man was said to be "*ḳälŋa ḳännomirri*", "skin with ashes", because the white dust of the ceremonial ground was still on his body and carried its *marr*.

[601] [21] As this paper may be read by many economists who may not have anthropological training, some reference to the kinship system of the aborigines may be of assistance. Under the system which is called "classificatory", the terms of relationship allied to the family and to near kin are extended to a number of people with whom no actual genetic relationship can be traced but who are grouped or classified with own kin. A man applies the term "father" not only to his own father but to all the people his father calls "brother" and this system is extended indefinitely. These terms expressing relationship are used instead of personal names, as terms of address. This system has the effect of reducing greatly the number of actual terms in use. But kinship terms are not mere names, for each carries with it a set pattern of behaviour. In Arnhem Land a man applies the term *n̄uḳul rumaro* (mother-in-law) to the daughter of his mother's mother's brother. He knows that he may look to this woman to provide him with a wife or wives and the pattern of behaviour

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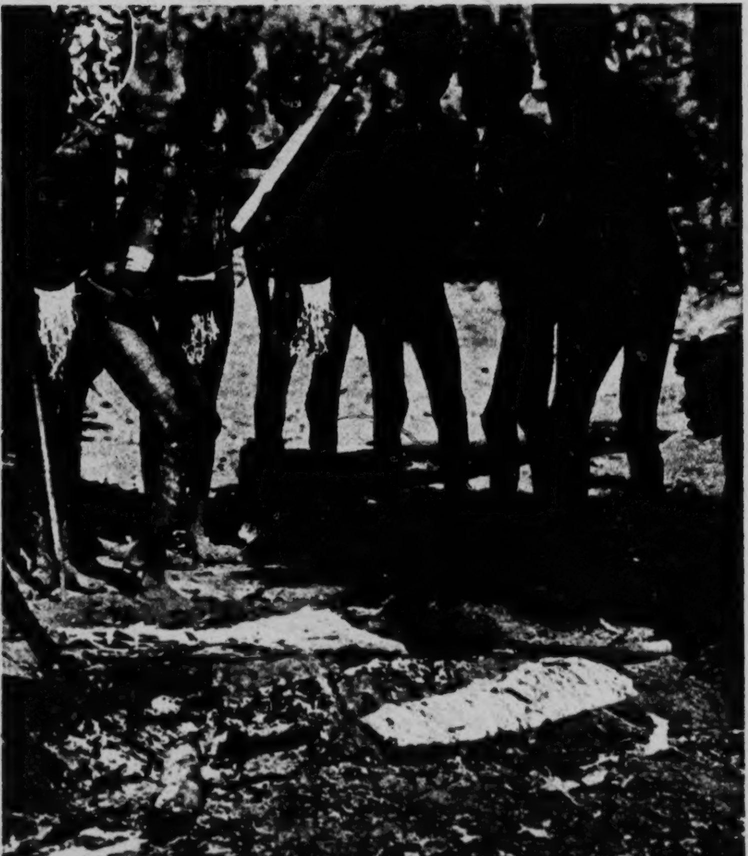

Plate 3. Ceremonial dedication of *ŋātu* (wrapped in tea tree bark), by the Dälkärramirri who recites over it the "big" or sacred names of the appropriate totem and so converts it into sacramental food.

[Facing p.43]

in-law), and with the particular *ḳauwäl* (mother's 182
brother) who is the husband of this woman to whom he 431
applies the term *muḳul*. Before the potential mother-in-law [604] 606
has a daughter, even before she is pregnant, he may begin
to send her gifts of food. These progressive gifts have a
cumulative effect and build up goodwill. They are divided
into two series, to each of which a special name is applied.
The first series are *milmarr*, while those given to the mother-
in-law after the birth of a daughter are known by a different term, *mundur*. As my informant said, "that is hard
work for me; she pays me back," i.e. by giving her daughter
to me in marriage. They believe that this special form of
giving has more than a "goodwill" effect, and that *marr*,
the spiritual force or power to which I have referred, goes
with the food, so that it has a greater significance than the
white man would attach to it—and much greater than its
mere value as food. The same applies to the special cere- 182
monial gifts of food and *gerri* which are presented by the 431
novitiate at various stages during his initiation to clan totems 561 626
and to other cults. Implicit in this form of giving is the 796
feeling which is even more important than "goodwill", that
it places the recipient under an obligation to repay. To [554]
remain under such a debt is to accept a feeling of inferiority,
of shame and humiliation.

In discussing the "drive", the urge to carry out the exact- 182
ing hard work (which in a fully organised aboriginal 431
society is everywhere in evidence) I have stressed the obli- 461
gation which a man feels to reciprocate with a gift of at 554 626

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toward *muḳul rumaro* is one of rigid avoidance. He may not speak to her nor she to him, but he has very definite obligations towards her (*muḳul rumaro*), including the obligation to provide her with certain animal food, with progressive gifts of a special type described above.

182 least equal, or if possible greater value, in order to maintain
431 his social status and to enhance his prestige. He achieves
461 554 this by his capacity to reciprocate a gift quickly and gener-
626 ously. If he failed to meet the obligations imposed, for
example by the kinship pattern, he would lose face, prestige,
in his group. It will be evident that this feeling of shame and
humiliation at failure to reciprocate a gift or to honour an
obligation, apart altogether from any danger of incurring
resentment and visitation by evil magic, furnishes one of the
most powerful mechanisms which underlie the production
of food and goods, and the circulation of these. This is
well shown by an example given to me by my informants,
which illustrates the use which can be made of this fact
262 to gain a desired objective. While a boy is still regarded as
562 a child, there is no tabu even for his sisters upon eating the
784 food that he may capture. But immediately after the circum-
cision ceremony, when his social status is altered and he
lives apart from his mother and father in the single men's
camp, the food collected or killed by a boy becomes tabu
to relations of certain orders, and is now known by a
special name, *kälŋboi* (*vide* page 21).

262 431 The eating of all *kälŋboi* food is surrounded by tabus,
784 even for those relatives who are permitted to partake of it at
606 all. For "outside" or "distant" relatives under the kinship sys-
584 tem to eat this *kälŋboi* food is a special privilege, but the
obligation to make ceremonial return payments, again of
the type called *tadoit*, is always present. *Kälŋboi* food may
sometimes be used to ingratiate a young man with a woman
who stands in the relationship of potential mother-in-law
(*mukul rumaro*) to him, but whose daughter has already
been promised (*wawun*) to another man some distance
away. At first the *mukul rumaro* may refuse the *kälŋboi*
food, but under coercion she may at length accept it, and

if she does so, is regarded as having compromised herself 262
into giving her daughter to the youth whose *ķälŋboi* food 431
she has eaten, although she knows that a fight must follow 784
when the man to whom the girl rightfully belongs learns 584
what has happened. Having accepted the *ķälŋboi* food the 606
woman also makes a ceremonial presentation of food which
she gives to her *ķorroŋ* (son-in-law), who however does not
eat it himself but distributes it to certain other relatives,
defined by custom.

This example will show the strength of the urge to recip- 182
rocate, to discharge an obligation, and the extent to which 183
it dominates the behaviour of these people, as well as its 431
importance as a driving force in social and in economic 461
activities, in which it furnishes one of the most important
incentives to work.

3.

CONCEPTION OF WEALTH, THE GIVING OF PRESENTS AND THE IDEA OF "PAYMENT"

435 436 The ideas of *wealth* and *value* in a strictly material economic sense are difficult to define in Arnhem Land. There is nothing approaching "money" or its equivalent, no currency that can be used as a measure or standard of value or medium of exchange, no means of accumulating wealth in condensed form. The term *gerri* is applied to all objects of value, to material possessions.

435 778 The first thing that must be understood clearly is that for the Arnhemlander all material objects are divided sharply into two categories, those which are *märdai'inboi* or *yarḵomirri* (sacred), and those which are *wäḵḵinŋu*[22] (profane). Objects of the first class, called *märdai'inboi*, comprise all things entitled to be termed *yarḵomirri*, which means that they are sacred by reason of dedication

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[22] *Märdai'in* is the ordinary or "outside" name for the clan totem, of which the sacred or *därrpäl* (hidden, secret) name is *räŋga*. *Märdai'inboi* (of, or from, *märdai'in*) signifies that the object to which it is applied is sacred or tabu, that it possesses the quality of "power" or sacredness by virtue of its association with the *märdai'in* and hence it is *yarḵomirri* and itself bears a name, i.e. the name of the clan totem to which it is dedicated. This at once restricts its use to members of a special cult, in this case to the fully-initiated members of the clan.

to, or association with, a totemic ancestor or a clan totem. 435

In the second category fall all things ordinary, non-sacred, 778
called *wäk̦k̦inŋu*, which in its literal translation means rubbishy, uncouth, outlandish, but is used also to denote merely the category of the non-sacred or "profane" in contrast with *yark̦omirri*.

The first category, which comprises objects called *märdai'-* 778
inboi or *yark̦omirri*, includes such things as the fine cere- [431]
monial armlets made from material which has been removed from the actual totem after the *ŋarra* ceremony, and sent as gifts to friends in other clans. In addition, it includes all weapons and implements, such as canoe-paddles, certain spears, baskets of special type, and smoking pipes which carry the *mintji*, the special totemic patterns of the clan, to
one of the totems of which they have been dedicated. This 778
dedication may take the form merely of the giving of the [552]
sacred name, after which the object becomes *yark̦omirri*, 784
or it may constitute a more elaborate ceremony in which 431
the *dälk̦ärramirri*—the "caller of big names"—in his capacity of high priest, calls ceremonially over the object, the sacred *därrpül* (hidden) names of the appropriate totem, thereby consecrating it. Thenceforth it becomes sacred. It is "*yark̦omirri*". If it is a spear, game killed with it becomes *duyu* (tabu), if a canoe paddle, all food taken from the canoe propelled by the paddle is also tabu. Its chief attribute is that it possesses *marr*, spiritual power derived from the totem or totemic ancestor whose name it bears. Its use is prohibited to all but fully initiated men of the particular clan (or associated group of clans) from which it came, and in the case of the special, sacred *mintji* or painted de-
signs, may not even be looked upon by profane eyes. To 431
possess these objects carries prestige, and their *marr* imparts [554]
power and strength as well as *tjämbait*—hunting prowess, 777
778

431 "good luck" in hunting. They make the hunter *mel kärku-*
[777] *luk*, far seeing, (lit. eye-clear). Such objects are given regu-
778 larly to friends and to members of other clans, particularly
[604] to people who stand in the relationship of *wäkku* (son,
woman speaking: sister's son, man speaking) but although
they carry the obligation to make heavy ceremonial presen-
tations in return, any idea of straight-out exchange—in the
sense of economic equivalence, of barter or trade, in con-
nection with things that are *yarkomirri,* is unthinkable.

784 Under certain circumstances, and after a lapse of time, a
778 rite may be performed to remove the tabu from these objects, particularly from canoe paddles, to enable the women and children to be fed on the fish or turtle secured from the canoe, after which they become *wäkkinŋu,* "ordinary" or non-sacred, and lose their *marr,* their "power" (to the initiated) and their "danger" (to the profane).

422 Objects of the *wäkkinŋu* type come under no such restric-
435 tions. In the category of the non-sacred are all a
[771] man's ordinary possessions, his spears and other weapons,
canoe, fishing lines, nets, harpoons and all his personal
equipment, and for a woman, her yam stick, domestic im-
plements and utensils, her baskets—and in fact all her posses-
[562] sions. For no woman may possess or use any object which is
yarkomirri.

000 In the foregoing account some of the incentives which lie behind the gathering of food and the manufacture of weapons and material objects have been described. A number of questions now arise. Does a man make all his own weapons and the implements which he requires for his own use, or does he acquire weapons from other people and in turn make them for others? If so, how are these exchanges made and on what terms; how are values assessed, payments made? Is the matter one of straight-out barter, the balancing

of one object against another? And again, are payments or 000 return barter deferred, or is the matter settled always out of hand by simple exchange, on the spot?

To understand this it is necessary to look into the whole system of exchange and of "payment" among these people, to live with them and to watch these things take place, to learn the basis of every exchange of property, above all, to record the actual terms applied by the natives themselves to each type of gift, exchange or other socio-economic transaction.

The ordinary word for giving is *gurrupän*. To take prop- 192
erty or possessions without asking is *djauyun*, but *djauyuna-* 431 437
mirri, to take from one another, to take one another's possessions, is used for actual exchange or barter. *Djauyun*, used without qualification, has almost the force of "steal", but a stronger word, *mänäŋirri*, (*mänäŋi*, imperative), is properly used for actual theft.

The following are the chief ways in which possessions 192
change hands, with the names given by the people them- 431
selves to these transactions:

(1) *yanna gurrupän*, (lit. for nothing give), a goodwill present, a free gift without any *immediate* obligation to reciprocate. But some kind of return presentation is inseparable from almost any form of giving.[23] As my informants expressed it "you give me and I give you back but I no tell you"; i.e. when I receive a gift I do not say that I shall eventually reciprocate. It is not on a bargain or barter basis, and the reciprocal gift in this type of exchange may be delayed indefinitely.

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[23] This apparent anomaly will be better understood in the light of information which follows later in this paper. See especially the meaning of *wetj*, page 78.

192
431 The giver knows that his gift must be reciprocated eventually and he gains much satisfaction from the anticipation of this.

(2) *kännän gurrupän*, a free gift, pure and simple, without any reciprocal obligation, as between *gurruto* (relations) of certain orders, and *mulkuro* (strangers), where there is a unilateral obligation to make presents. [574 609] To strangers, especially to visitors, it is customary, even obligatory, to make gifts of food or *gerri*, but as these people do not come within the normal kinship horizon there exists no established code of behaviour towards them and reciprocation is therefore not expected.[24]

(3) *baka bäkmärämma*, (lit. tail break), i.e. "to turn back the tail", to reciprocate. A present with definite reciprocal obligation. This type of giving carries the obligation to make a return gift or payment at once, and is quite different from the vague and indefinite obligation which characterises gifts of the *yanna gurrupän* type.

[606] (4) *milmarr, bundur*, the name applied to special forms of cumulative giving of gifts to relatives of certain

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[24] The importance of discovering some bond between individuals in Arnhem Land society, in order to establish a code of behaviour, is stressed by the fact that those outside the kinship system are called *mulkuro*, (strangers). When I asked a native who was short of tobacco if he had asked a certain white man he replied at once: "*Yuta bällända duall'—mulkuro*". He is a new white man that one—a stranger (with the implication "and therefore one with whom I have no bond, towards whom I have no established pattern of behaviour"), that is, one whose reactions there is no means of predicting.

orders (mother-in-law and husband of mother-in- 192
law[25]) to build up goodwill, *märaŋguma*, lit. "to build 431
up *marr*" (see page 37) and deliberately intended to [606]
leave a feeling of obligation (*vide supra* page 43).

(5) ***buku djauyun***, straight-out exchange or barter, in 192
which one article is balanced against another. In Arn- 431
hem Land, where the ceremonial aspect even of trans- 437
actions in which commodities change hands, is stressed, it is the "giving" that is the important matter, the rite, the gift and counter gift, rather than the assessment of its value or equivalent (see below no. 6).

(6) *mälli*, buy or purchase. The idea of direct purchase 177
is foreign to the Arnhem Land socio-economic pat- 192
tern and probably owes its origin to the influence of 437
Indonesian culture. In former times the Macassar [648
voyagers arrived on the coast of Arnhem Land with 175]
the north-west monsoon and dispersed along the coast to their regular fishing stations, vessels returning again and again to the same areas which they had visited in previous years and where they set up depots on shore for the boiling and smoking of *bêche-de-mer* or trepang.

The Macassar voyagers recognised the native ownership 427
of land, and the people say that they paid tribute each season 648
to the owners of the territories for the right to fish for trepang and pearls. In referring to this *payment* by the Macas- [192]
sar visitors it is significant that the natives used the word *mälli*. My informants stated that the natives themselves did not actually work for the Macassar trepangers but occa-

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[25] The special status of this man as the recipient, depends chiefly upon the fact, not that he is *kauwäl* (mother's brother), but that he is the husband of *mukul rumaro*, wife's mother, actual or potential.

427 sionally, when men were short, they helped to make up the
648 crews of canoes which operated as tenders from the praus
in diving for trepang.

177 Today the word *mälli*, with this idea of "payment", is
192
437 used principally in connection with the manufacture of
501 wooden dugout canoes, and these form part of the culture
173 complex that was left as a legacy by the Indonesian visitors,
a fact which is stressed in mythology.[28]

431 A glance at the various types of transactions listed above,
437 in which property, or *gerri*, changes hands, and in which
the natives' own terms and classification have been used,
brings out the fact that in all but one the social or ceremonial aspect rather than the hard material or "commercial", the strictly economic, is stressed, and that in
only one is the idea of direct *payment* or recompense, para-
[463] mount. This is in the manufacture of the wooden dugout
canoe, *lippa lippa*, which, as will be seen in section 4, is the work of special craftsmen. Apart from receiving it as a gift, there are two principal ways of obtaining a canoe. The first is by employing a craftsman to cut it, the second, called "*täḳḳul ḳoŋ gurrupän*", lit. "axe hand give", is to pay the craftsman by presenting him with a steel axe, which, after he has used it to cut the canoe, becomes his own property.

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[28] There is some tendency to assume that these wooden canoes were once manufactured with stone axes. Actually proof is not lacking of the fact that the *lippa lippa* (wooden dugout canoe) was part of the culture complex introduced by the visitors from Indonesia and that these canoes were never made in Australia until after the introduction of the iron axe. (This, however, does not apply to the seagoing dugout outrigger canoes of Eastern Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, which were made with native shell adzes, but which had a separate origin.)

But in few cases where exchange of goods takes place is 431
the matter as simple as this. In almost all, the ceremonial 435
accompaniment is the important factor, and the exchange or trade, the hard, matter-of-fact, economic aspect of the transaction, is to the Arnhemlander, relatively unimportant. Reduced to the level of mere "commerce"—the exchange of commodities, their value balanced against one another, shorn of the vital ceremonial, the transaction loses much of its meaning and interest to the native. To him it is the prep- [181]
aration for a visit to relatives within the ceremonial exchange cycle to discharge his obligations, the journey, the ritual, the formalities to be observed on arriving at the camp, the niceties of behaviour and etiquette, rather than the actual *gerri*, the goods themselves, that he values. So that in any appreciation of the economic life and exchange system of these people, in any study of their production of wealth and distribution or circulation of objects of material value, due regard must be placed on the psychological and social attitudes, which dominate and often mask and obscure, the undercurrent of economic exchange. Yet inside the framework of the kinship system and the clan organisation, within the exacting totemic scheme, each man carries on a system of exchange of *gerri*, of gift and counter gift, so that he is obliged to spend much of his working life in preparations to discharge obligations imposed upon him by the system into which he is born.

But in spite of this stress on the *traditional*, on the 421
ritual and ceremonial aspects, the emphasis on etiquette and behaviour, there is no suggestion here of the "primitive communism" which looms large in the references which occur in text books to the economic life of the people at the level of culture of the aborigines. The very words

421 for giving, for possession, the fine shades of distinction
which are drawn between each type of gift or exchange,
as well as the strict recognition of the rights of a man to
use and dispose of his own property, all lay stress on this.
No man would think of using the weapons or personal
[578] possessions of another without specific permission. To do
[685] so would lead inevitably to a fight. But there are a few well-defined
421 exceptions to this rule which occur in some special
426 relationships within the kinship system, where behaviour
602 is marked by much freedom, and in which relatives of
certain orders (*vide infra*) borrow one another's *gerri*
without permission and without any fear of resentment or
reprisal. These examples are exceptional and are associated
with a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by extreme
licence, contrasting strongly with the rigid tabu which
marks certain other relationships, particularly that between
mother-in-law and son-in-law, and only to a slightly lesser
extent, between brother and sister.

578 Theft is regarded very seriously among these people, and
685 I have heard altercations raging when boys or young
men from the single men's camp had stolen vegetable
food belonging to women, while it was still in course
of preparation. Violent abuse, leading to a general fight
in camp, often results even from such minor theft, and
large expiatory payments of food would be made by the
close relatives of the offenders to avert more serious
consequences.

421 These facts stress the recognition of the individual ownership
602 of property. This is emphasised also by the special
feature which is made of the right of *ḳutara* (sister's daughter's
son) to take or borrow possessions of a *mari* (mother's
mother's brother) with whom a special "joking relation-

ship" called *wäkkälmändji*[27] exists. Here again this right [421] to use the property of a *mari* (always a distant or "outside" 602 *mari* under the kinship system) is part of the pattern of extreme licence in behaviour which is permitted or even obligatory between certain men who stand in the relationship of *mari* ⇌ *kutara* to one another. The behaviour in this case emphasises the fact that this is a very special and unusual relationship and one which contrasts with the normal pattern of behaviour, of which it is a complete reversal. Towards my own *mari*, my own mother's mother's brother, the man whose daughter's daughter I may marry—whose actual daughter, my *mukul rumaro* (mother-in-law), is tabu, and to whom I must behave with greater reserve than to any other person in my kinship pattern—to this man I act with great circumspection and austerity. This is in marked contrast with the behaviour towards the *mari* whom I call *wäkkälmändji*, and whose *gerri* I may borrow.

This behaviour again serves to stress the fact that al- 421 though material possessions among these people are simple 602 and relatively few, the question of individual ownership of property and the right to dispose of this, is never in question, but is actually stressed in the kinship system, which defines and regulates conduct.

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[27] The "joking relationship", which serves to stress and to give [182] point and contrast to, the behaviour between relatives in which the [171] pattern is very restrained and austere, often takes the form of organised licence with exchange of obscene jokes and taunts which under other circumstances would lead inevitably to a fight, is a feature of the social organisation in many parts of Australia although there is little reference to it in the accounts of kinship which have been published.

See Donald F. Thomson, *The Joking Relationship and Organised Obscenity in North Queensland*, American Anthropologist, Vol. 37, No. 3, July-September, 1935. [113]

4.

CRAFT SPECIALISATION

463 In most parts of Australia, the material culture is relatively simple, and each individual makes for himself most of the weapons and implements that he uses in his daily life. This is generally the case in Arnhem Land, and a man makes his own spears, spear-throwers, and most of the other equipment that he needs for hunting and fighting. But frequently he admires the handiwork of others who show special skill in technique. This is particularly the case with spears, in which it is of some importance to a man to believe that his weapons are superior or that they have some special [431] quality. He often acquires spears from relatives in the particular quarter within the exchange cycle which may be renowned for such weapons, giving in exchange, spears which he himself has made and which may have special merit in the eyes of people in the territories through which they pass.[28]

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411 [28] The distribution and the use of various types of spears is not as simple as might at first appear. Both in Arnhem Land and on Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland, the serrated spines of the stingray are used for the tipping of spears. On Cape York Peninsula these nails or spines are regarded merely as material for the tipping or barbing of fighting weapons and may be used by
411 anyone. But in Eastern Arnhem Land stingray spines are associated in
614 mythology with *Bulmändji* (Tiger Shark), a culture hero of
773 certain clans claiming *Bulmändji* as a clan ancestor, and the right

Not every man is skilled in weaving *bäti* (baskets), of 285
which many types are recognised, each with its own name 463
and each made for a specific purpose. A man with special skill in weaving becomes known, but he is called merely *ḳoŋ mainmäḳ*, a "good hand". Such a man may acquire some local renown and receive substantial payments (*baḳa bäḳmärämma*) in return for his work, but again, this is a tribute to, and an acknowledgement of, the *marr* of the master craftsman, the prestige he brings, rather than "payment" for his activities, his craftsmanship. But it shows the beginnings of the recognition of craft specialisation, the *virtu* of special skill in craftsmanship.

But in the case of the *lippa lippa*, the wooden dugout 501
canoes, which may exceed 24 feet in length and may be 396
capable of carrying upwards of six to eight men on sailing

to use these stingray spines is the prerogative of these clans only 411
and is jealously guarded. 614
773

Again, the fine appearance and balance of a spear is not always 411
a gauge of its worth. I once remarked to an informant, Raiwälla, of 435
a spear shaft, that it was crooked and twisted, and the spear not of much value. But he corrected me quickly and pointed out that as the shaft was crooked the spear was not "flash" and was therefore more likely to fly straight to its mark. Such a remark is enlightening, because it stresses at once the great difference in the way in which the white man and the Arnhemlander look at even so simple an artefact as a spear. To the white man, a wooden shaft is of good or indifferent craftsmanship, but the native attributes personality to it. Its very appearance may be deceptive. It may possess *marr* from its background and association. For this reason a native may place great value upon spears received within the ceremonial exchange cycle, from areas renowned for weapons of a certain type, although to the eye of the white man they may appear to be inferior to those which he makes for himself. The native recognises [554]
the prestige (the *marr*) of the master craftsman. By their associations certain *gerri* possess *marr*, and they have therefore a vastly enhanced *psychological* value as fighting or hunting weapons.

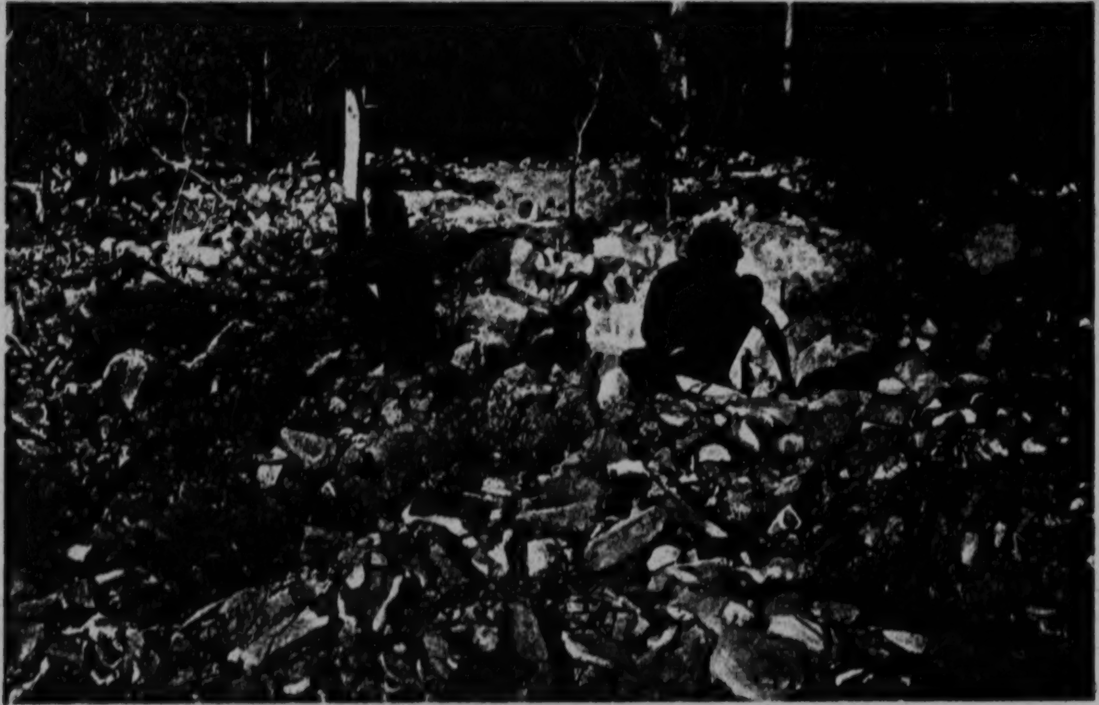

Plate 4. A section of the legendary flint quarry at ŋillipidji which covers several acres of ground. Here the blocks or cores of flint used in the making of flint spear heads and knives, called *ŋämbi*, are shown as they are quarried from the ground.

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Plate 5. Replica or "*mälli*" of old square-faced bottle which has been elevated to the level of a ceremonial totem of Mildjiŋi clan, emphasising the social and material value of glass. The geometric design in polychrome represents clouds, highly conventionalised, reflected on the wet surface of the bottle washed up on the shore. The small figures around the centre are trepang or *bêche-de-mer* seen through clear water.

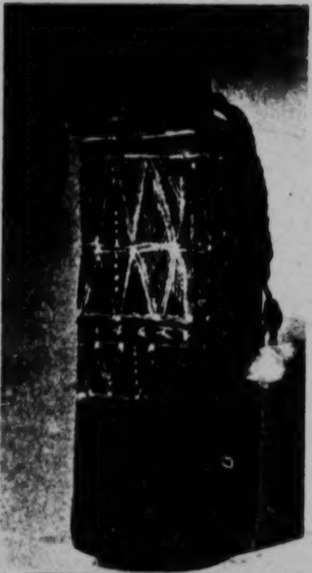

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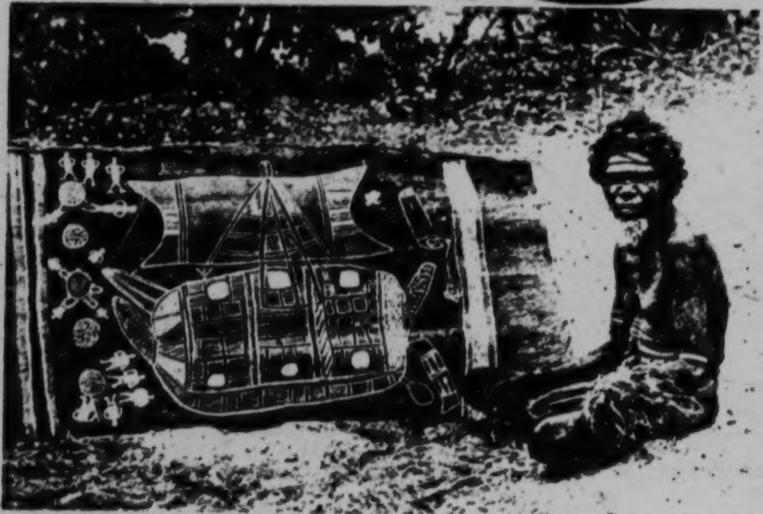
Plate 6. Wongo of Caledon Bay with a drawing in polychrome of a Macassar prau (*mitjäŋ*). These craft made regular visits to the coast of Arnhem Land and introduced *gerri* of a type called, collectively, "*muadäk*", which gave impetus to the ceremonial exchange cycle in this territory.



[p.58(β)]

The man is the hunter and on him falls the responsiblity of providing the bulk of the animal food.

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Plate 7. An Arnhem Land hunter returns with a Red Kangaroo, known throughout most of this territory as *k̥ärritjämbäl*, earning for himself the coveted title of "*tjämbait*".

Plate 8. A communal fishing drive with nets near the Liverpool River, North Central Arnhem Land. Communal enterprise is a feature of aboriginal hunting and fishing, the proceeds being shared among the participants as soon as the "drive" is finished.

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[p. 58(c)]

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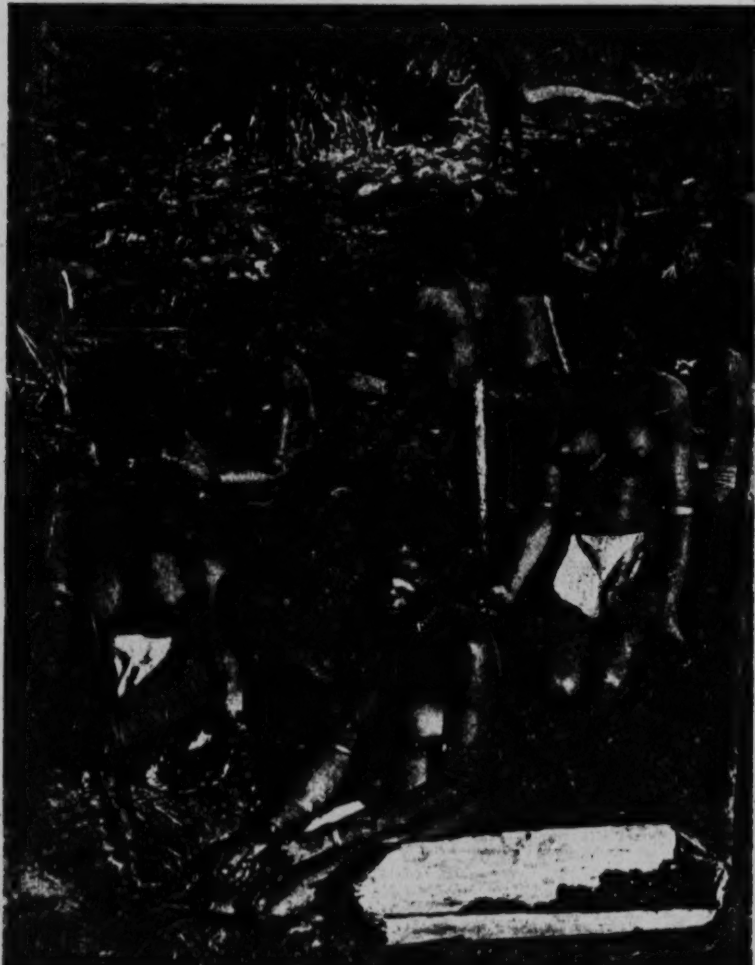

The woman is the provider of the vegetable food, which forms the chief food supply.

Plate 9. Women of Blue Mud Bay with their yam sticks, gathering corms of the Tall Spike Rush (*Heleocharis sphacelata*), which, for several months towards the end of the dry season, is one of the staple foods.

[p.58(D)]

[396] voyages in the open sea, the matter is different. These craft
501 are hollowed out of a single tree. They have no keels, but
are quite smooth underneath, and today are built without
outriggers (although these are said to have been used by
the Macassars), and depend for their safety and stability
as much on the skill employed in their manufacture as in
[435] the seamanship of their crews. These *lippa lippa* are unlike
any other element of material culture and are valued greatly.
173 The natives say that in former times the Macassar voyagers
439 brought these craft to Arnhem Land each season in their
648 praus and that a prau carried as many as eight or ten *lippa*
501 *lippa*. When the time came for their departure, the Macassar
men presented the canoes to the natives as part of their farewell
payment, and this became a ceremonial occasion.

177 Before the coming of the Indonesian voyagers the natives
501 used only bark canoes,[29] called *bärwän*, and swimming logs,
[396] and it was only after the introduction by the Macassars of
the *lippa lippa*, together with iron tools for cutting it, that
the Arnhem Land people began making wooden canoes
for themselves. Much labour is involved in the cutting
of a big canoe, and none of the tools formerly used
by the natives of Arnhem Land would have been fitted for
[412] this work. Although they possessed stone axes and shell
scrapers, they lacked such tools as the fine, strong, relatively
efficient adzes made from shell such as were used by the
sea-faring peoples of Cape York Peninsula. This fact, and
the way in which the wooden canoe was introduced, as
well as its association with the Macassar voyagers, has given
the *lippa lippa* a special place in Arnhem Land culture. But

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[314] [29] The bark used is that of *Eucalyptus tetrodonta*, one of the "stringybarks", which is much used in technology. In addition to the manufacture of canoes, it serves for the roofing of houses and for the manufacture of certain vessels used for carrying water, as well as in the preparation of food.

it must be remembered that the *lippa lippa* and the iron 177
tools for cutting them were part of the pattern of Indonesian 501
culture adopted by these people from the Macassar voyagers.

In the case of the bark canoe, while a good deal 396
of skill and experience was needed in making the craft, the actual time involved amounted to a few hours only.
A man was generally assisted in stripping the sheet of [476
stringybark,[80] and in the heating and folding of this, by his 602]
wife or other near kin, and no special organisation was necessary to feed him, or to relieve him of the need to hunt, over a period of weeks. But with the building of a big sea-going dugout canoe the matter is different and a considerable amount of organisation is necessary to build and launch the craft.

Today there are three principal means of obtaining *lippa* 431
lippa. The first is as a gift of the kind called *tadoit* (pages 437
40-41), to send back the *marr* after a *ŋarra* or other cere- 396
mony, a means, however, which is uncertain because it cannot be solicited. Of the other and more direct methods of obtaining canoes, *tükḵül ḵoŋ gurrupün*, (p. 52) is probably the most favoured, while straight-out purchase (*mälli*) (pp. 51-52), in which the *djalimulimo* or *djärtunmirri* is directly engaged to carry out the work, is used less
frequently. My informants said that the *djalimulimo* feeds [463]
himself during the progress of the work. This means that he must either spend a considerable part of his time in hunting or fishing or that he must depend upon his wives or other female kin to feed him in the period during which he is actually cutting the canoe. More rarely, responsibility for feed-

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[80] Although most of these bark canoes, even those which are about 14 or 15 feet in length, are constructed from a single sheet of bark, some, especially in the Gulf of Carpentaria, are made from two or more sheets sewn together.

MORE RARELY, RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEED-
[465] ing the canoe-maker is assured by the man for whom the
396 431 437 work is undertaken. He is paid finally in *gerri*, such as bundles of spears, baskets and tomahawks, which again take the form of "goodwill" (*ŋoi ŋämmatirri*) presents rather than payments calculated on the basis of exact economic equivalence. In these transactions, a bargain is rarely struck; the *djärtunmirri* is flattered by the request for his services to cut the canoe, and the *buŋgauwa lippa lippa*, the owner or master of the canoe, seeks to please the craftsman by making liberal gifts to ensure that the *djärtunmirri* is satisfied at
[152] the end of the transaction. For he knows that a man who
[578] harbours resentment will rarely declare this openly, but
[754] that he is likely to brood over it and eventually to seek the aid of a medicine man or sorcerer to avenge the wrong, real or imaginary. Even in this case, to which the name *mälli* is applied, the transaction is far removed from the level of simple purchase. But a big advance has been made in the recognition of craft specialisation and the idea of payment for the work of the specialist.

313 396 The responsibility of the owner, *buŋgauwa* (literally master) of the canoe, does not end here. A suitable canoe tree is hard to find and he may be obliged to select a tree some distance from river or sea, and to manhandle the heavy craft on rollers cut for the purpose.

431 476 396 The handling and launching of a new canoe is a big ceremonial occasion, and in consequence, a presentation of food is expected of the *buŋgauwa* as a gesture of goodwill to those who assist in the launching of the craft. This again entails work and organisation, and above all, the co-operation of numbers of people, including women, with divergent interests, the whole forming part of an intricate and nicely balanced system of obligation and counter obligation, of gift and counter gift.

5.

THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE IN ARNHEM LAND

When a newcomer in Arnhem Land settles down among 184
the people, he quickly becomes familiar with the material 181
culture and technology and is struck by the localised and restricted nature of the distribution of certain elements and minor traits and even of technological materials, and by the extreme conservatism of the people.

In the case of certain elements—in particular, the *mintji*, 184
the magnificent patterns in polychrome, the totemic designs 424
which are the hereditary property, the "copyright", of a 614
group called by these people, *barpuro*, (a clan or an aggregation of clans, linked by the possession of common totemic
ancestors)—this is understandable. Anything, whether social [578
or material, which touches the solidarity of these closely- 628]
integrated groups, is jealously guarded, and its infringement bitterly resented and quickly avenged.[31] So that prudence, as well as conservatism, plays a part in restricting

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[31] Sometimes this may be averted by expiatory or conciliatory [431
payments of food or *gerri* to appease the injured or offended senti- 182]
ments of the individual or group, which serve to restore a state of *euphoria* or ritual goodwill. But these presentations are invariably carried out in a ritual or ceremonial manner which gives them the stamp of formal approval of the society acting as a group and so lifts them above the level of mere personal or private feuds.

184 the free use of certain elements, because they are regarded
424 as the special prerogative of one clan or group of clans. This
614 applies most strongly to matters which relate to clan totemism, but in material culture it may extend even to such
[226] things as the technique of fish capture, the right to practise some specialised method of fishing, such as the *gorl*,[32] which have been developed in adaptation to peculiar local conditions and which are regarded as the exclusive property of the members of one clan or group of clans, who alone have the traditional right, not merely to fish in one territory, but even the exclusive right to practise the technique itself. In the case of the *gorl*, which is one of the most specialised methods of fish capture found anywhere in the world, this can easily be explained, for the technique is used only in one area on the Glyde River where it is localised in the territory of one or possibly of two, clans, and is therefore regarded as under protection of the *wäŋärr*, the ancestors of the clan or clans concerned.

184 The restriction of the use of such traits and specialised
424 techniques as the *gorl*, which are jealously guarded, and of
[688] which any infringement is bitterly resented and visited by
[685] vengeance, often leading to fighting and interclan feud,
[628] rests upon the belief that the heritage which its members have received from the *wäŋärr*, the ancestors of the clan, has been infringed, and that its solidarity has suffered damage thereby, rather than from economic motives such as the desire to monopolise food supplies, raw materials, or *gerri*, as with civilised man.

181 Even apart from these matters which touch on the
184 solidarity of groups and which therefore restrict the distribution of a trait or process, the people are extremely

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[113] [32] See Donald F. Thomson, *A New Type of Fish Trap from Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia*, Man, 1938, No. 216.

conservative, and this fact leaves a strong local stamp on 181
their material culture. Certain types of utensils may be 184
found only in one local area, and even spears, of which about [411]
30 different types occur in Arnhem Land, can often be distinguished by a local preference for such minor traits as the use of one particular bast fibre (*duiyärrḳ*) for lashing, or of one resin—whether *ŋotjamän*, (*Canarium australasicum*), *maipin bortj*[33] (*Erythrophloeum*), or the hard, brittle, black resin of *lännapu*, (*Callitris*), "Cyprus Pine", for each of which there may be a strong bias in a certain local area. The use of such materials is laid down by tradition, and the aboriginal craftsman is conservative, not much given to experiment. He follows the pattern which is traditional because he believes it was established by the *wäŋärr* (his totemic ancestors).

In contrast with this extreme conservatism in the use 177
of raw materials and in the technique employed in material 411
culture, it is sometimes surprising to find suddenly, in an area as remote from outside contacts as far Eastern and Central Arnhem Land were when I first went to live with these people in 1935, 36 and 37, such elements as boomerangs, (*ḳälli-gälli*), which are not made in this territory, bearing all the marks of authenticity of specimens from Katherine or Daly Waters—some two or three hundred miles away
to the south or south-west. And these are accompanied by [292]
such articles as the closely-woven forehead fillets called *ḳällämba*, heavy and closely-woven "bibs" or aprons called *mätta mätta*, *märtüt* or *tjänauwo*, worn around the neck, suspended on the chest during fights, and *bäḳḳürämma* or *bäḳḳa* (spears, having heads of ironwood with very long

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[33] *Bortj* is really liver and is apparently applied to this resin on account of the practice of moulding it into large lumps suggesting the lobes of a liver.

177 hooks, beautifully carved, and light bamboo shafts), 411 all of which are foreign to the culture of East Arnhem Land but are very characteristic of the regions to the west and south-west.

In answer to my questions as to the origin of these objects, I received at first only the laconic reply "*warnba*", or "*warnbaŋor*",[34] west or from the west, lit. west-from, and when I pressed the enquiry further, my informants added "*birr-barlai!*", far away from, a remote place. *Birr* is used to signify very great or very remote, in time or space, e.g. *pämmän birr*—a very long time ago, in the dim past.

The boomerang does not really belong to the Arnhem Land culture, although fine specimens are seen there not [431] infrequently. These are not manufactured locally and almost always show the character of the territory far to the south and south-west, from which they came. Their [534] value in this territory is no longer as weapons for fighting or hunting, but for ceremonial purposes—as "sing sticks" or clappers for beating time—in place of the short heavy ironwood sticks called *birlma* used to beat time for *männikai* ("sings" or chants) which are the accompani- [435] ment of each ritual and ceremonial act. Such *gerri* which 177 bear the halo and glamour of the celebrated exchange cycle, 411 are imbued with *marr*, with *virtu* or "value" apart 431 from their practical uses, and accordingly, some of them are used as objects of material culture and become ceremonial objects and may acquire a symbolic significance.[35] At first my enquiries elicited only the fact that these items

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[34] *-ŋor'*, *-ŋoru*, suffix expressing "motion from".

415 [35] A recent example is seen in the case of the boomerang, to 435 which reference has been made above, but other examples are not 778 lacking. One of these is *butulo*, recognisable as the replica (*mälli* lit. "shade") of an old square faced bottle carved from a block of

"from *warnba*" (the people of the west) entered the area 177
principally from the south-west, by way of the Raimbaräŋa 411
tribe, members of which have long been in the habit of 431
travelling down to outlying cattle stations and even to the
overland stock route, and that this food then came east.

Again, the most characteristic type of spear in use 411
throughout Arnhem Land, including the northern shore- 431
line, is *ŋämbi*, a hunting and fighting spear with a detachable flint head, (see frontispiece), *ŋämbi lirra*, (*lirra*, lit. tooth), mounted with hard beeswax and not with resin.
There are only two quarries from which flint spear [135]
heads are derived, but the best, the ones properly called [316]
ŋämbi, come from the quarry at *ŋillipidji*, in the hills near the Walker River in the hinterland of Blue Mud Bay. From this one quarry, of almost legendary renown, come most of the flint spear heads of Eastern Arnhem Land. These *ŋämbi lirra* are generally passed from hand to hand encased in a neat sheath of *Melaleuca* bark (*bärukälla*) called *djalk*—a name applied only to the sheath of this one type of spear and giving its name to *kumur djalk*, the quarter (*kumur*) from which these spear heads enter and of which they are the most characteristic feature. Great bundles of these fine spear heads pass from hand to hand throughout Eastern Arnhem Land, and even farther away to the south, beyond the Roper River, as well as to the west across the Liverpool. The second quarry, mentioned above, is located in the

ironwood and which has now become elevated to the level of a [778]
clan totem. In bygone days glass bottles which were occasionally 435
washed up on the beaches possessed special social value as material 415
for scraps and cutting implements. Similarly the wooden Malay anchor, with a single fluke, which was used by early visitors who came to Arnhem Land from the Celebes, has acquired a symbolic significance which is quite distinct from its original material value as the anchor (*luku*, lit. the foot) of a prau.

THE SECOND QUARRY, MENTIONED ABOVE, IS LOCATED IN THE
411 Liverpool area, but spear heads from this source are regarded
431 as much inferior to the *ŋämbi*, and are also known by a
[316] [135] distinctive name.

166 This much even the newcomer, who has his eyes about
431 him, sees for himself. It is clear that *gerri* circulate freely in Arnhem Land and far beyond, that the movements of certain special elements of material culture are extensive, and that they are not dependent upon the entry of the white man or the breaking down of the culture. As we have seen, the movements of the people themselves are restricted generally to their own clan territories and to those of a few neighbouring groups with whom a special relationship has been established, except on certain ceremonial occasions, or on *miriŋo* (war-making or avenging) expeditions. At other times they do not move very far afield, or at least they did not do so in former times. And again, we have seen that the very nature of the social organisation, the division of the whole of the territory among totemic clans each with its own intense internal solidarity and its equally strong opposition to other clans, was calculated to hinder and restrict, rather than to encourage, free intercourse between clans whose territories lay any distance apart.

431 How then are the *gerri* which bear, unmistakably, the stamp of origin in far away territories, actually circulated? By what means are they passed from group to group, and what is the motive force which brings boomerangs as well as other elements foreign to this culture at least two or three hundred miles from their place of origin, into a territory where their very function is lost? What, again, causes parcels containing *ŋämbi* to be brought considerably more than a hundred miles from the quarry where they were made? How do pounding and grinding stones, which are

of special types and very local in occurrence, come to be 431
distributed throughout the whole of this great territory? And how, again, are pigments and ochre—*miḳo*, (red), [317
butälläḳ, (yellow), and *raitpa*, a reddish-purple pigment 386]
with a metallic sheen which is used especially for ceremonial purposes—which occur in deposits localised in certain clan territories, distributed throughout the whole area? Why are these pigments and other materials not guarded as jealously as the patterns in polychrome and retained in one area instead of being so widely dispersed?

Each individual in Arnhem Land is the centre of a great 192
ceremonial exchange cycle. A man calls the people of all 431
those groups to the east and north-east of himself, naming them from the class of *gerri* which characterise them, *ḳumur miwait*; those to the north *ḳumur muadäḳ* (*muadäḳ*, the generic name for all calico or fabric), to the south-west and south, *ḳumur ḳärin* (inside), to the west and north-west, *ḳumur ḳätjirḳ*, and those to the south-east and east, *ḳumur djalḳ* (paperbark sheath used for *ŋämbi lirra*—literally the "tooth" or head).

Kumur is really the breastbone or sternum, but a hill is 192
also *ḳumur* or *buḳu*, and *ḳumur* is used again to denote 431
direction, aspect, and hence, the quarters within the cere- 572
monial exchange cycle. Each individual within this great cycle has friends of a type called *ḳumuryanna märnda*, really "breast to breast those two". This expression is used of friends who are partners, who stand opposite one another and exchange gifts or *gerri* within the exchange system, and between whom is carried out a life-long system of ceremonial exchange. These relationships, which go by the general title of *ḳumur märnda*, are sometimes very complex, sometimes simple. Certain types of gifts characterise each of the groups (and indeed in at least two

192 431 577 instances, actually give their names to them[36]). (See map No. 2.) A man who has relatives (*gurruto*) in groups in one direction (*kumur*) draws from that quarter, in the form of gifts, *gerri* (valuables), which he has an obligation to pass to relatives or friends in another group in the appropriate *kumur*. Although he received many presents, much *gerri*, in the course of each year, he does not hold these things for long but acts merely as a temporary custodian, a clearing house, and passes them on to satisfy the incessant demand for *wetj* (page 78), and to maintain his status and prestige in the *kumuryänna märnda* relationship of the ceremonial exchange cycle.

431 Certain types of *gerri* are characteristic of each of these *kumur* and the receipt of a gift from one direction sets up an obligation to reciprocate with *gerri* from another. So a series of obligations, each with its counter obligation, forms the mechanism by which *gerri* are passed for hundreds of miles, *always away from the direction in which they originated.*

182 431 This ceremonial exchange provides the basis for a great cultural movement that has for its motive force the all-powerful "drive" rather than the obligations of mere economic exchange, which although an important accompaniment, is subservient to the ceremonial aspect. It is this

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[36] *Kumur djalk*, applied to the people to the south and to *gerri* from that quarter (*kumur*), takes its name from *djalk*, the paper-bark sheath of *ŋämbi lirra*, the most characteristic and important object derived from this quarter in the exchange system. *Kumur muadäk* is named from *muadäk*, the collective term for the calico, wool and associated material which was introduced by the Macassar voyagers from this (northern) quarter and which, under the established system, passes to the south to *kumur djalk* and *kumur kärin* to satisfy the obligation for reciprocal gifts in return for *ŋämbi*, boomerangs and other characteristic *gerri*.

It is This
ceremonial exchange cycle, and the rule that *gerri* from 431 one direction pass to the opposite quarter, e.g. from *ķumur* [182] *ķätjirķ* and *ķumur ķärin* to *ķumur miwait*, which provides [177] the means by which such objects as boomerangs (*ķälli-gälli*), a conspicuous foreign element in the area, have come from a region hundreds of miles away. It provides the motive force by which bundles of stone spear heads, (*lirra ŋämbi*), have come north from the far-famed quarry at *ŋillipidji*, and dispersed throughout the territory. There is, however, some flexibility in this arrangement for it is obvious that a man who receives a ceremonial present from a partner may pass it to one of a number of people situated in a fairly wide geographical range. The natives refer to the routes along [192] which *gerri* are passed as *duķarr*, paths, or roads[37] because these have become fixed fairly definitely by tradition. Objects of a certain type, such as boomerangs, although they [439] are not manufactured in Arnhem Land but originate far to the south or south-west, may come by a south-western route along the Katherine River; from the south, up the Wilton by way of the Raimbaräŋa, a tribe of the interior, or they may come from the same source by a more easterly route via the Ritar'ŋo and Wagilläk clans, who, like the Raimbaräŋa, are interior people and are great rovers. (See map No. 2.)

This means that of a number of boomerangs manufac- 431 439

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[37] The use of the term "road" for these routes along which [171 192] objects passed within these ceremonial exchange systems, seems to have been general in Australia and Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown has furnished the following note from his experience of Western Australia:

"The way in which objects pass continuously in one direction (which the W.A. natives call a 'road') is illustrated by the presence of pearl-shell from the Kimberley District among the tribes of the Great Australian Bight."

431 tured by the Djauwuny' tribe about Katherine, some may 439 eventually reach a man on the Lower Glyde River, from *kumur kätjirk*, while others may come via the Wilton River from *kumur kärin*, and others again may be passed from partners in the *kumur djalk* quarter, by the partners of Ritar'ŋo or Wagilläk clans. This means that two boomerangs which have exactly the same origin may eventually reach a man in North-eastern Arnhem Land from two *kumur* on opposite sides of his territory. But because of their associations, and the fact that they are characteristic of the west and south-west of his horizon, boomerangs are usually regarded as part of the *gerri* classed as *kumur kärin* or *kumur kätjirk* and not as *kumur djalk*, although they may actually arrive via this quarter.

Another example occurs in the case of *ŋämbi lirra*, the much-prized flint spear heads. As stated above, these come from a single quarry which is located at ŋillipidji in the hinterland of Blue Mud Bay. But while typically they reach a Mildjiŋi clansman on the Lower Glyde River, (as the most characteristic *gerri* of the *djalk* complex) travelling up the Glyde River by way of Ritar'ŋo, Wagilläk and Tjinba or Wulläkki people, some are passed to the northward, and eventually reach the Glyde River area by the *kumur miwait* route along the southern shores of Arnhem and Buckingham Bays. (See maps 1 and 2.)

Each man, within the ceremonial exchange cycle, acts as a clearing house for *gerri* of certain well-defined types, holding them only for a short time and then passing them on in the appropriate direction in discharge of an obligation to reciprocate a gift from a friend or relative within the system.

A man of the Mildjiŋi clan of the Lower Glyde River, North-east Arnhem Land, who may engage actively in this *ḳumur märnda* exchange, gave me the following list of 431 *gerri* which he received from each of the five quarters or 439 *ḳumur*[38] which form the horizon of his exchange cycle.

(1) *Kumur miwait,* (east). *Kaiyit*[39] (iron headed spears) [411 and the round black pounding stones used throughout 412] Arnhem Land, especially for pulverising *ŋätu,* (*Cycas* fruit). This stone, which comes from the English Company's Islands, is called *poipuro* by groups as widely separated linguistically as Kopapoiŋo (and the allied Tjämbarpoiŋo) on the one hand, and Mildjiŋi on the other. Sometimes *ŋämbi lirra* (flint spear heads), which form the most characteristic of the *gerri* from *ḳumur djalḳ,* to which they give their name, may, as has been indicated above, reach a man in North Central Arnhem Land (e.g. a man of Mildjiŋi clan of the Lower Glyde River) by an easterly route via the roving Ritar'ŋo people, thence along the southern side of Buckingham Bay.

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[38] Mildjiŋi use the same name for these groups, but the actual word *ḳumur* (sternum) becomes *biri* in this language. [192]

[39] The natives of Caledon, Trial and Blue Mud Bays, on the [325] Gulf of Carpentaria, have acquired much skill in the making of *ḳaiyit,* and the manufacture of fine spear heads has become almost an industry at Trial Bay. Even before I actually entered Arnhem Land I had been surprised to obtain on the Roper River, iron headed (so-called "shovel") spears from Woodah Island, Blue Mud Bay. I found it difficult to understand why iron spear heads should be passing down to the Roper from Blue Mud Bay, where there was no white settlement, where contacts even by sea were few, and iron relatively scarce and highly valued, into country where cattle stations had long been established and where iron was relatively easy to get. But the explanation of this was found later, in the 182 discovery in Northern Arnhem Land of the existence of the ceremonial exchange cycle, which supplies the motive force for the 177 431 great movements of *gerri* over distances of hundreds of miles, of 439 which this is a part, and to which impetus was given by the coming

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431 (2) *Kumur muadäk* comprises calico, tobacco, blankets, [177 glass (the latter used for scrapers and highly valued in the 439] making of spears and other weapons), tomahawks, knives, belts, smoking pipes and other *gerri* of the type which are said formerly to have been obtained from the Macassars. [182 To fill the demand for *wetj* (page 78), and under the incessant 554] obligations of the ceremonial exchange system, these *gerri* are passed quickly to the southward—not so much under the urge for economic barter, as to fulfil obligations set up by the ceremonial exchange cycle and to gain the prestige, which the ability to send *gerri* of this order confers on the sender. For, while it will be seen that this fulfils a definite economic function, its basis is primarily ceremonial.

(3) *Kumur kätjirk*. A series of very characteristic *gerri*, some of which differ considerably from those made in

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[177] of the Macassar voyagers which brought iron to Arnhem Land long [182] before, it was known in what later became the settled country of 431 the Roper River.

439 The most interesting feature of this southern movement of spears is the fact that, today, when the position is reversed and when iron is relatively scarce and difficult to obtain in Arnhem Land in contrast with its abundance in the settled country of the Roper River valley, the passage of fine iron spear heads from Blue Mud Bay, which was developed under the impetus of the ceremonial exchange cycle, stimulated by the coming of the Macassar voyagers, still continues, although the practical need for it, the demand for iron spear heads for actual use in the Roper River area, must have passed, or at least must have been much reduced. The fact that the *economic* need which it served has passed, stresses once more the strength of the *ceremonial aspect* of the *kumur märnda* exchange cycle. [572] It must be remembered that partners within the ceremonial exchange cycle exist of such long standing that they have even become hereditary. These people send *gerri*, and these must be reciprocated with presents of the type long established by tradition, whether they seem appropriate or not.

Eastern Arnhem Land, come from *ḳumur ḳätjirḳ* 431
across the Liverpool River. *Källämba,* (forehead fillets), 439
märbät or *tjänauwo,* (woven "bibs" or aprons), hooked spears of the types *bäḳḳärämma, mat'tji'tji* ("biting bags" used to hold between the teeth in fighting), as well as *bärlatta,* (heavy fighting clubs).

(4) *Kumur djalḳ. ŋämbi lirra,* (*ŋämbi* spear heads), *ḳälli-gälli,* (boomerangs), *ḳai'u,* (chain mesh dilly bags), and *ŋätjin* or *bulnyin,* (opossum fur pubic coverings or aprons made from opossum fur). So a *ŋämbi* spear coming to a Mildjiŋi man of the Glyde River travels from the quarry at ŋillipidji near Blue Mud Bay in Wagilläk territory via the Ritar'ŋo, (a nomadic group of *yiritja* moiety having a big territory in the interior of Arnhem Land).

(5) *Kumur ḳärin,* the chief route by which boomerangs (*ḳälli-gälli*) enter North-eastern Arnhem Land, also provides hooked spears with bamboo shafts of several types made in Central and North Central Arnhem Land; belts of human hair of large ceremonial type—an iron-headed spear of special type known as *lämma* with a very short, broad blade that distinguishes it from *ḳaiyit.* Today (in contrast with former conditions[40]), it yields also *djimindi* (wire for

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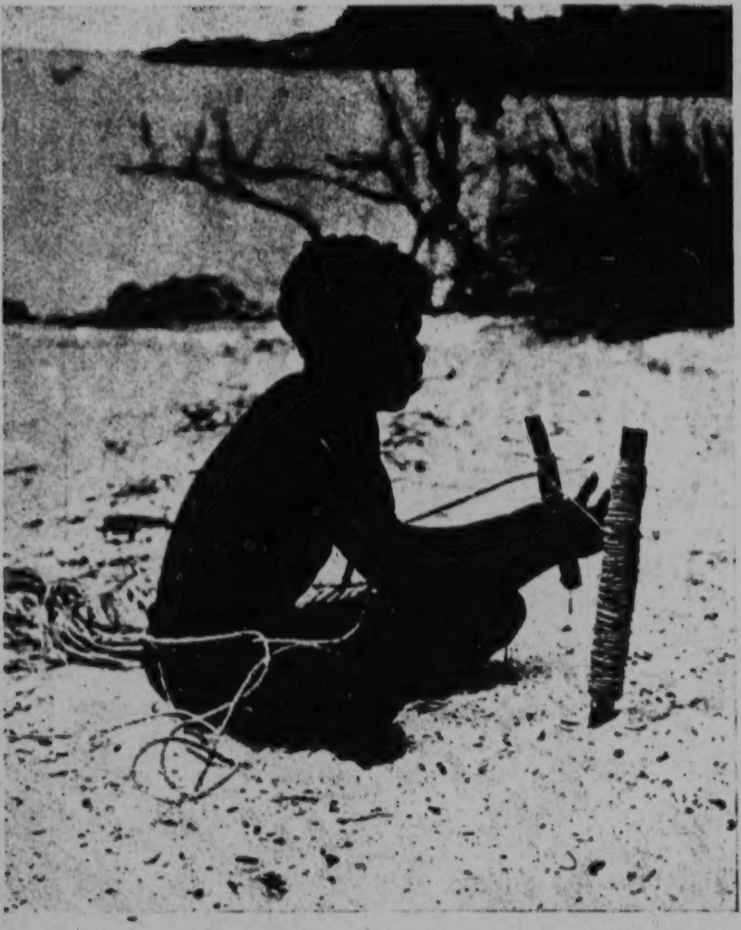
[40] The first source of such valued *gerri* as axes, iron, wire, [177
calico and tobacco, for the whole of Arnhem Land, was the visiting 174]
fleet from the Celebes or elsewhere in Indonesia, and there is evidence that articles of this order were passed far inland long before there was any settlement in the Northern Territory. But today the order is reversed to some extent and a considerable amount of calico, wool, blankets, axes, iron, wire and fish hooks passes north from the settled cattle country along the *duḳarr* of the ceremonial exchange cycle. When this *gerri* reaches Arnhem Land it is still known as *muadäḳ* because it belongs to the category of objects which came originally from *ḳumur muadäḳ.*



The division of labour between the sexes is stressed in Arnhem Land social life and technology.

Plate 10. A man of the Wessel Islands making a rope of *bulgut*, the fibre of *Brachychiton paradoxum*.
(Compare Plate 11 overleaf)

[facing p. ~~74~~]

431[fish spears), iron bars or rods used for digging and for the
439] manufacture of spear blades, and especially *källämba*—the
closely woven forehead fillets worn during the *kunabibbi*
ceremony—which come up from the neighbourhood of
Katherine and Mataranka and from the cattle stations in
the south, by way of the Wilton River and Mainoru Station
whence they are carried north by the Raimbaräŋa and
[552] Ritar'ŋo people. The tradition which lays down the *gerri*
derived from each quarter is so well established that the
name of the *kumur* serves also as the collective term for
the *gerri* which characterise it. The flint spear heads which
come from ŋillipidji under the ceremonial exchange system
may be referred to equally correctly as *ŋämbi* or *djalk*. And
again, any calico, wool or other material which is associated
with the Macassar visitors.

431 It is an understood thing that no object is passed back to the quarter from which it came. Thus a *kaiyit*, an iron-headed spear, that came from the east (from *miwait*) is constantly passed westward, and must not return to *miwait*. This is so much a part of the tradition that when a man is asked for a spear, knife, or other object with which he does not wish to part, not infrequently he replies that it came from *kätjirk*, or whatever the country of the person seeking the *gerri* may be, with the inference that it may not return to the same *kumur*, and so averts the embarrassment of a direct refusal. But it is obvious that this rule is not inflexible and that in practice, with so many changes of hands, *gerri* may be dispersed widely, while still maintaining the general direction. This has already been illustrated in the case of *ŋämbi* (page 65), which, though having only one place of origin at ŋillipidji, may actually reach a given area, e.g. Mildjiŋi territory on the Lower Glyde River, by circuitous, as well as by the direct route,

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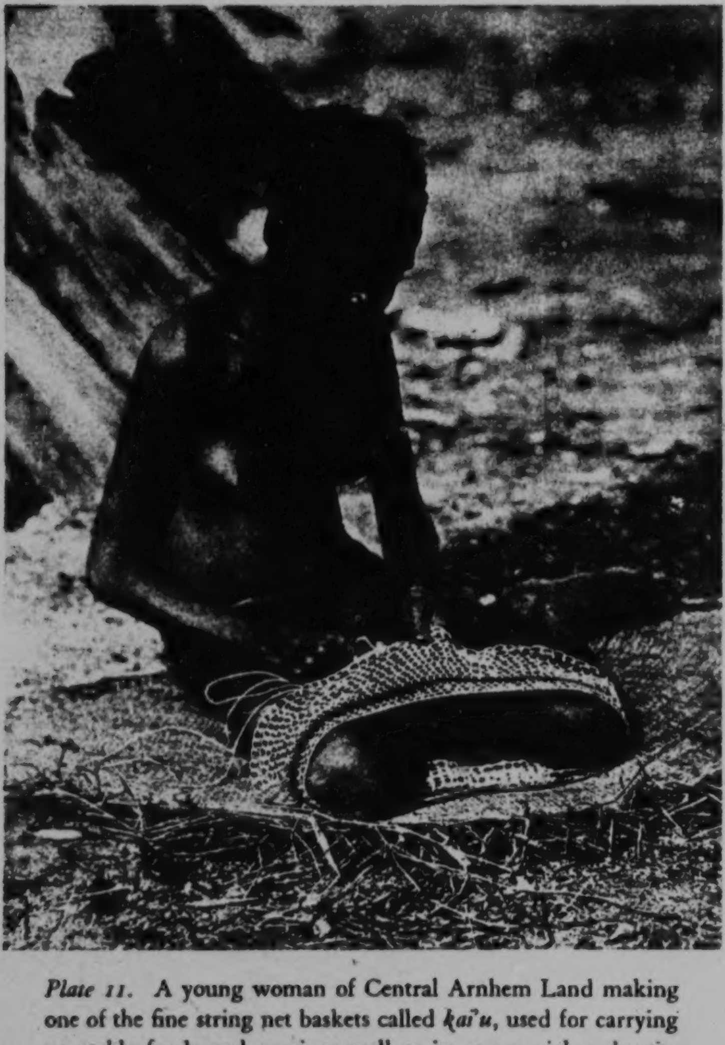

Plate 11. A young woman of Central Arnhem Land making one of the fine string net baskets called *kai'u*, used for carrying vegetable foods and *gerri*, as well as in ceremonial exchange. (Compare Plate 10 overleaf)

[Facing p. 75]

from *kumur djalk*. But because of its known origin, a 431
ŋämbi lirra (flint spear head) is always known as *kumur* [552]
djalk, and for this reason it would not be appropriate for
a man to the north to pass *ŋämbi lirra* as *wetj* to a partner
in the south-east.

In order to understand the complicated system sur- 182
rounding the exchange of gifts and the sharing of food and 431
game it would be necessary to have not only a thorough 572
working knowledge of the kinship system and the obliga- 602
tions, unilateral and reciprocal, laid down by its terminology, but also to understand each of the special relationships which, in addition to those arising from kinship, may exist between members of the society.

To avoid further extending this account, I shall refer to 602
one only of these special relationships. This is *tjukarŋo*, 601
a term used reciprocally between individuals who stand in one of two relationships under the kinship system; *wawamändji*[41] (*wawa*, brother; *-mändji*, those two) or *marimändji*, i.e. *mari* ⇌ *kutara*, (mother's mother's brother ⇌ sister's daughter's son). Where these people stand in the relationship of brother they are usually half-brothers, the sons of women who are sisters, especially of sisters who have married men of clans on opposite sides of their own clan territories. Another factor is that often the relationship of *tjukarŋo* has existed between the mothers—who are not full or half-sisters—for it may exist between women as well as men. A man extends the same term also to brothers and sisters of his *tjukarŋo*.

Tjukarŋo is a very special relationship, the closest and most 602
permanent that can exist between men.

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[41] The suffix *-mändji* denotes mutual relationship together, i.e. *wawa-mändji*, brothers together; *wawa* is really elder brother but is used in this connection to express the relationship between brothers.

602 My informants said that they had never known *tjuḳarŋo*
431 to fight. So intimate is the bond that exists between these
553 people that their social personalities are often closely identi-
fied, and men, but not women, who stand in this relationship
may exchange personal names. When this occurs they also
exchange all their personal possessions—spears, dilly bags
(baskets), tomahawks and other *gerri*. The exchange of
names may take place at any time and not merely on some
special ceremonial occasion. It may be permanent; and the new
name then passes to the *ḳutara* (sister's daughters), while
my own *ḳutara* now takes my name—the name which
431 belonged formerly to my *tjuḳarŋo*. The chief feature of
602 this very special relationship appears to be the obligation to
send presents, and to act as host and protector to the
tjuḳarŋo when he is on a visit, or when danger threatens.
[726] If a member of a *miriŋo* (war-making) party meets his
tjuḳarŋo when on a raiding party he will enfold him in his
arms to protect him from spears, and he will act also as
protector to his wife and children.

An important feature of the *tjuḳarŋo* relationship is exchange of gifts and a sharing of possessions no matter how valuable. It is probable that this special relationship in which the reciprocal obligations to give are very strong, arose originally from some special feature of the kinship organisation.

But the relationship upon which the great ceremonial exchange cycle rests is, as stated on pages 67 and 68, called simply *ḳumur märnda*.[42] Men or women who apply the term *ḳumur märnda* to one another, normally stand in one of the following relationships:

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[42] *Kumur*, lit. sternum, hence, breast, face or aspect; *märnda*, those two, hence literally, "face to face" or "breast to breast" those two.

ŋäti	⇌	*käminyarr* (mother's father—daughter's son and daughter).	431 602
kauwal	⇌	*wäkku* (mother's brother—sister's son and daughter).	[601]
duwe	⇌	*källai* (mother's brother's or father's sister's son and daughter).	
mari	⇌	*kutara* (mother's mother's brother—sister's daughter's son and daughter).	
wawa	⇌	*yukko yukko* (elder brother—younger brother).	
bapa n'ymokunin	⇌	*katu* (father's younger brother—son and daughter).	
maralkor	⇌	*korroŋ* (mother's mother's brother's son—father's sister's daughter's son and daughter).	

People who stand in the *kumur märnda* relationship are 431
regarded as partners facing one another in the exchange 602
system, and each has the obligation to give gifts of the appropriate 577
order. Each strives to pass to the other, his partner in the *kumur mändji* relationship, gifts of the kind appropriate to the *kumur* in which he stands, and the partner in turn must reciprocate, though not necessarily immediately. This exchange is not in any sense [182]
barter although circulation of goods on a large scale results. Its primary object, to the native, is not merely to gain goods, for to these people the ceremonial aspect is the important one. As my informant said: "Meaning, to give all the time—*kumur märnda ŋällinya* (partners together, we two)—all the time, till die". i.e. the objective of each is to give in order to maintain and affirm the bond between each *kumur* pair, until they die, when their children carry it on. If two men die who are *kumuryanna märnda*, their wives may take over the relationship, and carry on the ritual exchange. The importance of the [192]
ceremonial aspect, and the fact that this relationship is

431 different from that of pure economic exchange, is indicated
602 by the use of a special term, *wetj*, which means "to give",
[192] but in a ceremonial sense, a sense quite distinct from that
577 for which the ordinary word for giving—*gurrupän*, (*gurrupulo*, imperative), is used. Again, my informant, Raiwälla of Mildjiŋi, in explaining the ceremonial exchange cycle, the *kumur märnda* relationship in which he was a very active participant, exclaimed, "If you have a good thing here, might be you give it to me. You think, 'I give it to him. I like to give it to him.' All right, *wetj gurrupulo närräna*[43] (you give to me)." To illustrate further the meaning of *wetj*, this man added, "If he asks, you give it to him because he asks. But if you give it yourself—that is *wetj*—that is *marr*, because you *like* to give it to him."

"*Djal* *ni* *gurrupänarau*," he added in the
Like (desire) you to give,

language, i.e. it is *marr*[44] because you give it freely, spontaneously, from a desire to give and not because he has asked for it. Freely rendered, "If you have something you value, perhaps you may give it spontaneously to me, your partner in the ceremonial exchange cycle. Or you may think about it and waver."

In this phrase my informant expresses the momentary
431 hesitance, the reluctance of a man with something he
602 prizes, and would like to possess himself, to pass it on to
577 his partner in the *kumur märnda* relationship. He thinks about it and wavers—but finally he decides to give it. The

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[43] A little of the native text has been retained, chiefly because it is difficult to find the exact equivalent in English.

[192] [44] *Marr* has been defined (page 37) in part as "spiritual power"
[777] but it means much more than this. It is also the "power to respond" and is generally associated in some way with personal things. *Marr* is the "power", the "drive" which lies behind ritual and is the force which brings good and bad "luck", success in hunting.

informant explains this feeling, and contrasts the spirit in 431
which such a gift is given, in these circumstances, with 602
one which is given merely in response to a request. He 577
conceives his giving within the ceremonial cycle—which is of the type called *wetj*—as due to *marr*, to the force, the ritual urge, (stronger, even, than the desire to retain and possess *gerri*) to pass them on and either to increase thereby his own prestige in the *ḳumur märnda* relationship, or to acquit himself of an existing obligation in the quarter to which he sends it.

Again the same informant, Raiwälla of Mildjiŋi clan on the Lower Glyde River, a fine and intelligent native, with a great number of partners in this ceremonial exchange system, widely dispersed throughout Central Arnhem Land, said of his two younger half-brothers (from the same mother) who belonged to Ritar'ŋo clan and who were *ḳumur djalḳ* to him: "Wuruwul and ŋälländir (his half-brothers) bring *ŋämbi djalḳ . . . must* I give *wetj*." i.e. "They bring stone spear heads" (from ŋillipidji the appropriate *ḳumur* in the exchange cycle) "and I *must* reciprocate."

To fail to repay these gifts quickly, even with his own [558]
half-brothers, would be to lose face, to suffer in prestige— [626]
perhaps even to be passed over next time a gift in the ceremonial exchange system was available. Some idea of the importance of the smooth operation of the ceremonial exchange cycle, and of the extent to which it induces a state of *euphoria* or ritual well-being, may be gathered from the answer which I received from this same informant (Raiwälla) to a question which I had put to him.

When Raiwälla listed *büti mindjalpi* (a special type of woven basket carried by men to contain their personal possessions) among the *gerri* which he received from *ḳumur*

577 431 602 *miwait*, I asked him if he did not make these *mindjalpi* himself. He replied "I make them, but different country—he must give me *wetj*—like this" (holding his hand out). "If you give me, I can't say 'I don't want it' because this arm belong him goes this way—it points along me. *Marr* (goodwill, spiritual power) goes this way, I must take it. *Wetj* is like *marr*."

182 431 435 But if it is the sociological bond, the *ḳumuryanna märnda* relationship, which is so much stressed by the natives, this ceremonial exchange has also an economic side which is no less important than the ritual, and which accompanies it, taking advantage of the motive force and the mechanism and driving force of the more obvious ceremonial exchange. Under cover of the great ceremonial exchange system, of which an outline only has been given, large quantities of *gerri* pass from one territory to another, and although in some cases, as with the *büti* (basket) called *mindjalpi*, the actual article itself varies little if at all from a similar object of local manufacture, it has special value, *virtu*, by reason of the fact that it has been made in another country. This is particularly true of spears, which circulate freely throughout the area, and are valued often because they are believed to possess special merit derived from their place of origin—because they acquire a halo of glamour and romance by reason of the way in which they are acquired; because they have *marr*. And although the natives still retain "ordinary", (non-sacred) objects, this gives those acquired by ceremonial exchange a history, a background, a personality which lifts them above other *wäḳḳinŋu* objects and gives them a greatly enhanced value in the eyes of people who receive them.

182 431 Here then, is the nucleus of a great system of exchange, which, though it differs in many respects from our own established ideas of trade or barter, supplies an incentive,

and above all a social and ceremonial background 182
to the aborigine, far more important than the mere 431
material gain of *gerri*. It furnishes him also with an in- [461]
centive to work and to lavish special skill on the making
of objects of material culture, in order to discharge his obli-
gations within the scope of this system, which no mere desire
for economic gain, shorn of its ritual and pageantry, could
achieve, however great the material reward.

6.

THE INFLUENCE OF INDONESIAN CULTURE ON THE IDEA OF WEALTH AND THE CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE

174 Into the setting which has been described, superimposed upon this organisation, came the virile culture brought by the Indonesian visitors to the coast of Arnhem Land. We do not know when these visits first commenced or even who the first of the visitors were, but the evidence seems to indicate that they began at a comparatively recent date, [114] although probably considerably earlier than the time suggested to Matthew Flinders[45], who in 1803 met with a number of praus on the north-east coast of Arnhem Land at a place which he named in consequence "Malay Road", close to the English Company's Islands. The crews of these vessels which Matthew Flinders encountered came from the Gulf of Boni in the Celebes. They informed Flinders that people from that territory had made six or seven voyages to the coast of Arnhem Land during the preceding 20 years and that they themselves had been among the first to make the voyage. This, if correct, would place the date of the first Indonesian contacts at about 1783.

We know that these voyages continued regularly well into the present century, when they were apparently stopped by repeated intervention of the Australian Customs Authorities after Federation. 174 The Indonesian influence in Arnhem Land, therefore, probably extended over a period of nearly two hundred years, perhaps much longer. Although there 177 is no conclusive evidence as to the time when these visits commenced, there is reason for the belief that they occurred over a relatively long period, and a study of the culture shows that the visitors from Indonesia exercised a strong influence on the people. This is apparent in their material culture, and to an even greater extent in their social and ceremonial life and mythology. I have mentioned (page 71, footnote) my surprise at finding in settled country on the Roper River, even before I entered the then isolated country of Arnhem Land, fine iron spear heads from Blue Mud Bay, an area where iron was still difficult to obtain and much coveted. The natives of this region have been suspected of [721 attacking *bêche-de-mer* and other craft merely for the iron 325] in the water tanks and trepang boilers, from which, by a laborious process of hammering and grinding, they manufacture fine spear heads. This was in 1935, when I had been [123] sent by the Commonwealth Government to investigate unrest and tribal fighting in Arnhem Land. The people of [648] Caledon and Blue Mud Bays were regarded as warlike and aggressive and were still greatly feared by the natives to the south, with whom they had little contact and who would not have entered their territory.

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[45] Op. cit., Vol. 2, page 231.

Subsequent work in Arnhem Land revealed the existence 174 of the great ceremonial exchange cycle which has been 177 431 described in detail on page 67 above. But while the *kumur märnda* relationship exists throughout the whole of Arnhem Land, and while the ceremonial exchange cycle draws *gerri* from far beyond this region, there is evidence for the belief that it was the visits of Macassar voyagers, who

(174) brought articles of great material and social value, which
177 gave a special impetus and furnished the "drive", not only
431 for the circulation of *gerri* over hundreds of miles of
country, but which did much to overcome also the organised
"opposition" between clans.

114 These observations contrast strongly with the conclusions
177
431 of Professor W. Lloyd Warner[46] who states:

439 "The trade with the Malays seems to have been purely on a basis of exchange, with very little else in its social content. Nevertheless it had little effect on the aboriginal ideas of trade . . . The native sometimes exchanges things he possesses for the things he needs and cannot get from his own territory . . .

"All this," Warner considers, "again shows the strong resistance of the Murngin culture to outside influence. The Malay trader came for an exchange of goods and nothing else; and it would be thought that, in the hundreds of years he is likely to have been in Arnhem Land, he would have given a new impetus to Murngin ideas of exchange. But as far as can be determined, the Murngin ideas are no different from what they were before he arrived . . ."

And again, after stressing the value of the iron axes brought to this territory by the Malays, Warner says, "It is unlikely that many iron axes ever reached the interior peoples." Of these axes he adds, "The substitution of the iron tomahawk (brought in as an article of trade by the Malays) for the stone axe can be understood, since the iron implement is a far more capable instrument, and a more important reason—the tomahawk was easily acquired and it was not necessary to learn how to make it. There was no arduous labour attached to collecting turtle shell to trade for an axe, for the shell came as a by-product to the pursuit

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[46] W. Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilisation*, 1937, (pp. 458ff).

of harpooning turtles. The making of the stone axe took 114
time and a considerable amount of hard labour; but to go 177 431
turtle hunting was a pleasure, since turtle harpooning expe- 439
ditions are not only for the anticipated enjoyment of the flesh and to supply the family larder, but also for the pure joy of stalking the turtle, spearing it, and bringing it home to an admiring audience which could appreciate one's abilities as a hunter and a man of importance. Undoubtedly pride of workmanship is felt by a native axe-maker. His fellow tribesmen always express their appreciation of a well-turned-out axe or spear head, but the social approbation given to the two occupations is completely disproportionate."

And again, in the continued use of the bark canoe by the people of Arnhem Land after the introduction of the *lippa lippa* by the visiting seafarers from the Celebes, Warner sees proof of the conservatism of the aborigine.

"The conservatism of Australian material culture is more or less demonstrated by the persistence of the bark canoe. Even today men who know how to make a dugout with outrigger equipment paddle their bark canoes across the open sea from island to island and from the various points of land . . ."

Professor Warner has missed entirely the tremendous importance of the impact of this Indonesian culture on the ceremonial life of these people in his review of Malay or Macassar contacts with the people of Arnhem Land, from which the above extracts are quoted. And in his remarks on the ease with which the native acquired iron axes, and his comments on the conservatism surrounding the continued use of the bark canoe he tends rather to over-simplification.

There is no justification for the conclusion that the cul- 114 177

114 ture of the natives of North-eastern Arnhem Land showed
177 a resistance to the influence of this virile culture from Indonesia, and certainly none for the statement that the ideas of these people were "no different from what they were before he (the Malay seafarer) arrived . . ."

121 I do not propose here to attempt a full review of the in-
177 fluence of the Indonesian culture on the ceremonial life of these people, but merely to show its effect on the ceremonial exchange cycle and the economic system which accompanies it.

177 That this influence was extensive is proved beyond ques-
192 tion by the fact (see pp. 67, 68f) that the term *muadäk*,
431 which gives its name to *kumur muadäk*, the northern sec-
439 tor of the exchange cycle, is the collective or generic name given by the natives to all the *gerri* which they obtained formerly from the Macassar visitors, of which the chief items are knives, axes of the type called *luŋa linya*, nails (for fish hooks etc.), fish hooks and lines, bottle glass (for scrapers), tobacco, smoking pipes (*pämatukka*), belts, wooden dugout canoes, (*lippa lippa*), beads, (*männi-männi*), and material such as calico, blankets, string and later, wool, to which the collective term *mäthäkäl* was applied.

114 When Professor Warner contrasts the ease with which an
324 Arnhem Land native acquired an iron axe from the Malays,
135 with the labour involved in the making of the (admittedly)
431 much less efficient and satisfactory stone axe, he overlooks
463 certain important factors. First, that stone axes, like flint spear heads, are made from special stone which occurs only in restricted areas, and that while any man who merely uses an axe to get wild honey, can grind the edge, the implement itself is usually made initially by a craftsman, a specialist in the working of the stone who lives in the country in which it occurs, and like the smooth hard

pounding stones called *poipuro* (page 71) it is exported 114 135 324
as *gerri* within the ceremonial exchange system. 431 463

It is part of my thesis to show that an important function 182
served by the ceremonial exchange cycle is in supplying 431
this incentive, this motive for fine craftsmanship, the an- 324
ticipation of the ritual and pageantry, by adding romance or 463
"glamour" to work which would otherwise be drudgery. A man does not as a rule set out to manufacture a stone axe as he may a fish spear or a hunting spear, to satisfy an immediate need. Such an implement requires hours, even days, of grinding and polishing after the preliminary rough shaping of the hard stone. But, as it has been pointed out, these axes are made by a craftsman who probably learned the craft from his father and are accumulated as *gerri* which will be presented on some future ceremonial occasion to "pay back" a present that the maker has received from one of his exchange partners, or they are used to create an obligation which his partner will later discharge.

The stone quarry at ŋillipidji where *ŋämbi lirra* are [135-
made, covers acres of ground, and hundreds, perhaps thou- 316]
sands, of spear heads come from the quarry in the course of a year. Like the stone axe heads, these flint heads are not made for immediate use, but are passed from Wagilläk territory—in bundles of a dozen or so, each wrapped neatly in the paperbark sheath called *djalk*—to reciprocate ceremonial presents of *muadäk*, or to build up goodwill and prestige. Big bundles are sent north and north-west, in the knowledge that they will be reciprocated ultimately with other *gerri* of a traditional kind and of at least equivalent value.

From the orientation of a man of Mildjiŋi clan of the 182
Glyde River, the people to the north who occupy the terri- 431
tory along the northern shoreline, at Glyde Inlet, and Banyan 438

182 Island at the mouth of the Goyder River, are *kumur mua-*
431 *däk*, and it is from his partners in this region within the
438 *kumur märnda* relationship or ceremonial exchange cycle,
and in former times from the Macassar people themselves, that a Mildjiŋi man looked, for all the articles of the class called *muadäk* and *mäthäkäl*.

My informant, Raiwälla, of Mildjiŋi clan (of the middle Glyde River), speaking of the *kumur märnda* relationship, the circulation of *gerri*, and his place in the exchange system, said quite spontaneously:

"I make (*gerri*) come down from *diltji* (hills) and go down along sandbeach." i.e. "I, as 'middle man' gather *gerri* from the high hills—in this case from *kumur djalk* and *kumur kärin*—and send them down to the coast."

In the phrase quoted above, my informant expressed his attitude towards the exchange cycle and his understanding of the part it plays in the circulation of wealth. He sees himself, in his territory on the Glyde River, as the "middle man" between the people of the inland (to whom he is *kumur muadäk*), and the people of the coast (to whom he is *kumur kärin*). (See map 2 of Arnhem Land with diagram of ceremonial exchange cycle, prepared from standpoint of a Mildjiŋi clansman.) From the inland he obtains *gerri* such as *ŋämbi lirra* (flint spear heads), *källi-gälli* (boomerangs), *källämba* (forehead fillets), and many other items, and passes these on to his partners on the coast, from whom he obtains reciprocal presents, especially of the *gerri* called *muadäk*, which he, in turn, must pass inland again to *kumur kärin* and *kumur djalk*. For the people of Banyan Island, the mouth of the Goyder River, and Howard Island, most *gerri* of the *kumur djalk* horizon come by another route—along the Goyder River and the hinterland of Buckingham Bay. From the social standpoint the constant

FROM THE SOCIAL STANDPOINT THE CONSTANT
flow of *muadäk* from the Macassar visitors enabled a man 182 431
of this area to discharge his obligations to those from whom 439
he had received *gerri*, and to maintain and to build up his [554]
prestige. From the economic point of view it had the effect of stimulating the circulation of *gerri*, of maintaining a balanced exchange of goods, under cover of what, to the natives, is the vastly more important social and ceremonial relationship.

The orientation of the ceremonial exchange system as it 177
still operates, with the emphasis on the "approved" or tra- 182
ditional *gerri* in each *kumur*, leaves no doubt as to the im- 431
petus which the coming of the Indonesians gave to the culture of this area. The people of the coast, who in former times came into direct contact with the Macassar visitors—and in more recent times, with trepang fishermen and casual seafarers—and who have provided the iron, nails, and bottles (for glass scrapers, etc.) for their exchange partners, are named from the special *gerri*, known collectively as *muadäk*, which they send as reciprocal gifts to their partners in the south.

It is not proposed to deal at length with the ceremonial aspect of this infiltration, and a single reference will suffice to show the effect on ceremonial life, which gives weight to the data which has been recorded, and of the value placed upon the *gerri* which were brought by the Macassar seafarers, as well as the effect of this on economic and social life.

The Mildjiŋi clan of the Glyde River has not only come 177
strongly under the influence of these Indonesian people, 431
but among other traits, has adopted a square-faced bottle, 532
called *butulo*, and has elevated it to the level of a clan totem. 778
Today the *mälli*, the representation, "the shade", the nonmaterial representation or effigy of this bottle, is carved laboriously from solid ironwood, and is painted with a

177 sacred totemic design called *tärrupoŋon*—comprising
431 clouds in highly conventionalised form—which the people
532 say were reflected on the wet surface of the old square-
778 faced bottles when they were found, wet and glistening, cast up by the sea. So that for Mildjiŋi, the bottle, which is regarded as part of the heritage from the Macassar visitors, had a double interest. It ranked among *ḵumur muadäḵ gerri* for ceremonial exchange and as an ordinary "*wäḵḵinŋu*" (non-sacred) manifestation of the *butulo*, which mythology tells them was brought, in ancestral times, by the Munäŋa, the Macassar seafarers, and which therefore gives the people a charter for the adoption by Mildjiŋi clan of *butulo* as a ceremonial totem.

114 Here is proof, not only of the recognition of the social
177 value of bottles, which in former times were valued greatly
431 as material for scrapers, but also a refutation of Warner's statement as to the conservatism of Arnhem Land culture and what he has termed the "strong resistance of the Murngin culture to outside influence". The example quoted is only one instance of an influence which has been widespread in Arnhem Land culture.

To suggest that it is unlikely that many of the iron axes which were brought by the Malays would reach the interior people, is to underestimate the dynamic effect of the impact of this virile culture on the people of Arnhem Land. In 1935 I made a long patrol on foot across Arnhem Land, and I remember well seeing, on the wall of a rock shelter, far inland, the drawing of an iron axe of the special type called *luŋa linya*, brought in former times by the Macassar people. At the time I felt some surprise, but this feeling disappeared with the subsequent discovery and understanding of the operation of the ceremonial exchange system

182 431 577 438 It is probable that under ordinary conditions, if the circulation of these axes depended on straight-out exchange or barter, their value to the seafaring peoples of the north and east coasts of Arnhem Land, for the cutting of dugout canoes, would have been such that the people would have parted with them reluctantly. But under the ceremonial exchange system, and the compelling need to build up goodwill and to increase their prestige by the circulation of *gerri*, and especially to make reciprocal gifts for those already received, the people on the sea coast, who received these axes first, must have been compelled to pass many of them rapidly southward to partners in *ḳumur djalḳ* and *ḳumur ḳärin*. Of this circulation of *gerri* an informant remarked—"I must make road there". It is significant that he used the words "must" and "road". The word "road" my informant translated first as *ḳumur*, then as *ḳumur duḳarr*—conceiving the movement of *gerri* as so regular and extensive as to make a beaten path or "road", *duḳarr*, a conception to which reference was made on page 69 above.

But again it must be remembered that the *social* obligations of the ceremonial exchange cycle, which to the natives are the obvious and vitally important ones, far outweigh the economic exchange which accompanies it, and sometimes persist after the actual need for its *gerri* has passed, as in the case of the iron spear heads from Blue Mud Bay which were passing down to the Roper River long after this area had become settled.

177 431 There is little doubt that a ceremonial exchange system existed in Arnhem Land before the coming of the visitors from Indonesia and it is not intended to suggest that the exchange system in this territory depends on the coming of these seafaring visitors. But its orientation at the present time, and its most important "drives" certainly owe much

177 to the impact of Indonesian culture. The giving and
431 exchange of gifts, of *gerri*, is an important accompaniment
(602) of much of the ritual that takes place in Arnhem Land and
[182] is an integral part of the behaviour which is obligatory
between relatives of certain orders within the kinship
system. A number of special relationships, of which one,
tjuḵarŋo, is mentioned on page 75, are also characterised
by the exchange of possessions.

And again, the fact must be stressed that the ceremonial
431 exchange cycle is not merely a matter of exchange or barter,
577 although the economic exchange is a vital accompaniment,
but that a man having once established a place in the
ḵumur märnda relationship, must reciprocate with the
appropriate *gerri*. As one of my informants said (page 79),
"*Must* I give *wetj*"—"I *must* reciprocate." And again, when
he is offered a gift, a man cannot refuse it—he *must* accept
it—and after holding it for the period permitted by custom,
pass it on to one of his partners. When people of an inland
clan, who are partners in the *ḵumur djalḵ* and *ḵumur ḵürin*
directions, brought big ceremonial presentations of flint spear
heads, boomerangs, forehead fillets (*ḵüllämba*) and large
ceremonial hair belts and other *gerri*, to their exchange partners in *ḵumur muadäḵ* the people would have no choice.
They would be obliged to accept the *gerri* brought by the
visitors and to reciprocate. The *gerri* appropriate to each
[183] quarter are defined by tradition, and again, it was stated that
tradition lays down the rule that *gerri* from one *ḵumur* may
[182] not return to the quarter in which they originated. The
[433] practical effect of this custom would be to make it difficult
for the people of the coast to have a monopoly of iron implements, such as axes, knives, iron spear heads, wire for
fish spears, even if they wished to do so. It would be impossible for them to possess these without the knowledge

of their immediate neighbours who could solicit such *gerri* 182 431
by themselves making substantial ceremonial presentations, 433 577
requiring appropriate return gifts.

The social implication of the *kumur märnda* relationship 177
is such that if the inland people maintain a constant stream 182 431
of *gerri* to their neighbours to the north, these must be 577
reciprocated, with resultant increase in the volume and tempo of the exchange cycle. It will be evident that under this system it would be impossible for any man to accumulate, or to hold permanently, much *gerri*. To do so would mean to default in his obligations to exchange partners. He would lose prestige and social status. His social personality would suffer, which, to these people, would far outweigh the value of the possessions. The functional importance of the exchange system and the vital part it plays in the social and ceremonial life of the people of Arnhem Land, as well as the stimulus which it must have received through the coming of the Macassar visitors, is evident. The Macassar influence is important not merely as a source of the greatly valued *muadäk*, but also for the incentive which this gave to the inland groups to send up *gerri* to *kumur muadäk*, which they knew must be reciprocated with the articles which they valued, and which were most important to their own
social life and economy. And by no means the least im- [619]
portant feature of the ceremonial exchange cycle was the part it played in overcoming the effect of the segmentary organisation, which would tend normally to restrict communication, a fact to which reference has already been made.

The facts which have been presented, although they deal 177
with one relationship only, will suffice to show that the 182
influence of the Macassar visitors on the economic life and 431
ceremonial exchange cycle of the natives of Arnhem Land

177 was an important one. It supplied the "drive" for the
182 extensive exchange system which was in part ceremonial,
431 and it furnished the mechanism and the dynamic force
under cover of which *gerri* were sent south to discharge obligations set up by receipt of a steady flow of gifts, and so to stimulate reciprocal presentations by creating obligations which must be fulfilled.

Important as were the contributions made by the Indonesian visitors in actual material objects, such as iron for knives and fish hooks, wooden *lippa lippa* and the axes with which to cut canoes and so to augment food supply, their most important contribution was social—in the dynamic effect these things exercised on the social and ceremonial life under cover of which the important, but less obtrusive, economic exchange system has been developed.

GLOSSARY

Clan. The clan (not "tribe") is the most important permanent unit 614
of social life in Arnhem Land. It is an aggregation of families,
the members of which are linked together by the possession
of totems in common and the belief that they are all linked
together by descent from a common ancestor or ancestors. Entry
into the clan is by birth alone. The clan group is comprised of a
man and all his relations in the male line (since the people are
patrilineal), i.e. his father, father's brothers and father's sisters,
his own brothers and sisters and his sons and daughters and all
the children of the male members of the clan. The clan is
exogamous, that is, a man may not marry within his own
clan. This means that the group which at any time *occupies* a 621
clan territory actually consists of the male members of the
clan and their children, including their daughters who are not
yet married, as well as women who are members of other
clans and who have married men of the clan, minus those
women of the clan who have married into other clans and gone
to live with their husbands. For this functional, *occupational*,
group, the name *horde* is used (see below). The clan is the [614
heredity land-owning group, but the war-making group is 423]
generally the horde.

Classificatory system of relationship. The kinship system of the 601
Australian aborigines is known as "*classificatory*" because it
extends indefinitely the relationships set up by the family by
applying the terms which a man uses for his own kin to a
large number of people with whom no actual genetic relationship can be traced and whom we should not call relatives at all.
Thus a man uses the term which he applies to his own father
not only for his father's brothers, but also for all the people
whom in the widest sense, his father calls "brother". In this way
the family system is extended indefinitely and groups together
with own kin, not only all the members of a man's own clan,
but also all the people he meets in the normal course of his
life. When he knows what term he applies to a man he knows
how he should behave to him and also what his obligations are.

616 ***"Dual division"*** or ***"dual organisation"***, cuts right through the social organisation of Arnhem Land (as in many other parts of Australia and elsewhere), dividing it into two halves or "moieties", so that half the clans, with their totems, fall into one moiety and half into the other moiety.

In Arnhem Land the moieties are called *dua* and *yiritja*, but they are not always actually named and the *dual division* may be present and may function without the moieties bearing names. Often the natives believe that they can detect physical differences between the members of the two moieties. Sometimes they assert that the people of one moiety have curly hair and those of the other straight, or that there are differences in eye or skin colour. There is often a marked *"opposition"* between moieties to which formal expression is given on ceremonial occasions. This formal or "organised" opposition finds expression, and is often stressed, in the mythology, and especially in totemism, the whole of the totemic organisation being divided between the two moieties.

784 783 673 ***Euphoria.*** A state of social well-being brought about by the correct observance of ritual behaviour, especially of tabus, in contrast with *disphoria*, a "ritual state of sin" or "bad luck" due to the breaking of tabus. Generally a formal rite of expiation or "purification" of a type laid down by tradition, must be carried out by the individual or by the group to restore a state of *euphoria*.

582 ***Exogamy*** is simply the rule of "marrying out" as opposed to *endogamy*—marriage within the group. In Arnhem Land society the family, clan and moiety are all strictly exogamous and each of these groups is comprised of people with whom marriage is not only not permitted, but to whom, under the kinship system, the pattern of behaviour is incompatible with that towards a wife or husband.

592 595 ***Family.*** This is the fundamental unit in social life. In Australia it is the group consisting of a man and his wife or wives, (for these people are *polygynous*), with their young children, own or adopted. Each family lives as a separate, and to a large extent independent, unit, within the camp of the horde. It makes its own fire around which its domestic life is centred and at which it prepares its own food. Around the fireside the food is eaten and here the family sleeps and lives its own separate life.

621 ***Horde***, is the name given to the group which at any time actually *occupies* a clan territory. It is the important functional group and is generally the war-making and law-making group and is an independent social and political unity, but its membership may change, and it lacks the permanence and stability of the clan, the group which a man enters by birth alone.

Kinship is very important in Australia and is the chief factor under- 602
lying social organisation and behaviour both between individuals
and between groups. Every individual is born into a kinship
pattern which under the classificatory system defines his
relationship not only with his own kin but also with all those
whom he meets during the ordinary course of his life. Kinship
terms, or terms of relationship, are used in place of personal
names. They are not mere terms of address, for each carries
a set pattern of behaviour.

Mälla, in literal translation, any ***group***, but used also in a special 614
sense for an aggregation of clans linked together by the possession 615
of common totems or by the sharing of at least a part of a
common totemic inheritance.

Moiety (see dual division).

Patrilineal. Descent in clan and in certain other social groups is 600
traced either in the male or in the female line, i.e. through
the father or through the mother. When reckoned through the
father it is *patrilineal* and when traced through the mother it
is said to be ***matrilineal***.

Totems and totemism. A totem has been defined as an animal, plant 779
or inanimate object, with which a person, or a group of people,
believe that they have a special relationship. This is true, but it
does not go far enough. Many different kinds of totemism are
known in Australia, including clan, moiety, conceptional,
personal, cult and ceremonial totemism. In all, a very special
relationship exists between the individual or the group and its
totem or totems. Often, in clan totemism, the people believe that
they are descended from one of the totemic ancestors of their
clan and that these ancestors, called *wäŋarr in* Eastern Arnhem
Land, founded the clan and its culture and way of life and
established the traditions which the people follow today.

Tribe. In Australia the tribe is merely a linguistic unit, a group of [197]
people often very loosely united by the possession of a common 619
language, and whose component clans occupy a certain definite
territory. It is certainly not the most important unit of social
life. It is not the land-owning group, the law-making or war-
making group and has no political autonomy. Tribal organisation [184]
is conspicuous by its absence from most of Eastern Arnhem
Land, although normal tribal organisation occurs at Groote
Eylandt, at Bennet Bay and on the southern boundary of the
territory, along the Roper River, as well as from the vicinity of
Cape Stewart westwards.

INDEX

(The letter "f" after a number indicates a footnote)

adoption, as means of entry into horde, 12; provided for under kinship system, 3f. ooo
animal food, provision of, task of men, 25..
Arnhem Land, geographical features, rainfall, resources, 14-15.
attitudes, psychological and social, 53.
avoidance, brother-sister, 21; mother-in-law, 42f, 55.

babies, carried in bark troughs, 29.
bad luck, (ritual visitation), 32f.
bark canoes, 58; of stringybark, 58f.
barpuro, aggregation of clans linked by totemism, 61.
bärtatumoro, 35.
baskets, 24-25.
bêche-de-mer, or trepang, 51; ships attacked for iron in tanks, 83.
behaviour, laid down by kinship, 3f; pattern, 50f, 55.
bindjitj, (see *mundjutj*).
A Black Civilisation, W. Lloyd Warner, 11f, 84.
Blue Mud Bay, 65, 70, 71f, 83, 91.
bones of dead, handled by relatives, 40.
Boni, Gulf of, 6, 82.
boomerangs, 63, 64, 66, 69-70, 73; as ceremonial objects, used as clapping sticks, 64.
borrowing, of possessions, in "joking relationships", 54-55, 55f.
botanical associations and economic resources, 14.
brother-sister tabu, 21, 54.
bulgut, fibre of, *Brachychiton paradoxum,* 30.
bulnyin, possum fur, collected for ceremonial purposes, 31.
bundur, (see *milmarr*) special type of cumulative gift, 50.
buŋgau'wa, master, leader, of canoe etc., 60.
burning of grass and related food supply, 18.
butulo, symbolic significance, 64-65f; elevation to clan totem, 64-65f; replica carved in wood, 64-65f; association with Mildjiŋi clan, 89-90; part of Macassar culture complex, 89-90.

Caledon Bay, 83.
calico, and allied material, collective term, *muadäk,* 67, 68f.

[p. 98 is blank]

600

camp, dry season, 28-29.
Celebes, visitors from, to Arnhem Land, 5f.
ceremonial aspect of economic exchange, 53, 77-78.
ceremonial exchange, 5, 5f, 26, 27, 80-81, 83; cycle, 67, 70, 71, 72, 83, 86-87; partners in, 78, 87.
ceremonial, revelation (of sacred rites), 41.
chieftainship, absence of, 11.
children, (follow parents when hunting), 29-30; play, 33-34.
clan, 5f; bond between clan groups, 9; definition and organisation, 11-12; entry by birth only, 12; totemic, 9-11.
classificatory system of relationship, described, 3f, 42f.
Commonwealth Government, special commission to investigate cause of unrest and tribal fighting, 83.
communal enterprise, organisation of, 18, 20; fishing, 18, 20.
conservatism, of Arnhem Land aborigines, 63, 85.
conserving and storing food, beginnings of, 23-34.
copyright, recognition of ownership of designs in polychrome, 61; rights jealously guarded, 61.
craft specialisation, beginnings of, 6, 9, 57.
cruelty to children, unknown, 4f.
culture contact, from Indonesia, 4-5.
culture heroes, as founders of clans, 9.
culture myths, functional significance, 34.
culture pattern, effect of Indonesian influence, 6, 6f.
Cycad Palm, (*Cycas media*), fruit, 19.

Dälḳärramirri, ceremonial dedication by, in role of high priest, 23, 47.
danger, (ritual), in objects endowed with *marr*, 32f, 38.
descent, in clan group, 9, 11f.
dingo, status of, 8.
division of labour, between sexes, 21, 25; sharply defined, 33.
djalḳ, 65, 87; bark sheath of stone spear head, 67, 68f.
djauyun, 49.
drive, 38; sociological, 43.
dried fruit, preparation of, 23-24.
dry season, 15.
dua (moiety), 10f.
dual division, 10f; (see also moiety).
dugout canoe, see *lippa lippa*.
duḳurr, road, trade route, 69; (see also 69f).

ecology, 14, 14f, 19f.
economic aspect, subservient to ceremonial, 80-81.
economic exchange cycle, circulation of objects of value within, 53-54, 66.
economic exchange of presents, 4.

economic structure, 6; of Trobriand Islands, 1.
etiquette, and behaviour, importance of, 53
euphoria, ritual state of well-being, 61f, 79.
exchange, ideas of, 4, 53; social and psychological attitudes in relation to, 53.
exchange, ceremonial, 5, 5f, 26, 27, 80-81, 83; partners in, 78, 87; (see also economic exchange).
exogamy, of clan, 10f, 12.
expiation, of infringement of solidarity of group, 41.
expiatory payments, 61f.
expiatory rites, 41-42.

family, as unit in social life, 17, 20; definition, 12; hunting activities, 29, 30.
fibres, plant, *bulgut* etc., 30; used in technology, 63.
Firth, Raymond, 1, 1f.
fish poisons *rotenone, saponin, tephrosin*, 19; toxicity, 19.
fishing, technique, development in adaption to local conditions (*gorl*), 62; property of hereditary clan groups, 61-62.
Flinders, Matthew, 6, 7, 82.
food, *ŋätu*, eaten on ritual occasions, 23; preparation of dried fruit, 23-24 (see also sacramental food); staple, 22; storage, beginnings of, 23-24; tabus, 44; rendered tabu by contact with sacred object, 41-42.
funeral rites, 40.

gerri, goods, possessions, material wealth, 5, 13, 28, 37, 39f, 53, 70, 71f, 72; borrowing of, 54-55; circulation away from direction of origin, 68; conciliatory payments of, 61f; objects of wealth accumulated, 87; circulation, 66; impetus to circulation, 83-84, 89.
gifts, giving and exchange of property, 49-51: obligation to reciprocate, 4, 43, 44, 70.
goodwill, 43; presents, 60.
good luck (*tjümbait*), 38, 41.
gorl, fish trap, 62.
grass burning, seasonal, 17-19.
Groote Eylandt, tribal organisation, 11f.
gurruto (relations, kin, collective term), 68.

high priest, *dälḳärramirri*, role of, 47.
horde, (not clan). definition, functional group, 11.
hordes, fighting between, 5f.
house types, 16-17.
hunting; communal drives, 18; daily routine of, 28-35.

idea of payment, 51-52; (see also value).
implements and utensils, 24, 26.
incentive, 87.

600

Indonesian culture, drive furnished by impact of Indonesian culture, 6; effect of infiltration, 6; influence in Arnhem Land, (see also Malay), 82-83; on Mildjiŋi clan, 89-90; stimulus to exchange cycle, 89; visits to Arnhem Land, duration of, 7, 82-83.
iron axes, circulation influenced by Indonesian contact, 91; introduction 52f; Macassar type, 90; and iron tomahawk, 84.
iron spear heads, 9, 83; circulation, 69f, 71f; manufacture, 9. 83, (see also *kaiyit*).

joking relationship, within kinship system, 54-55, 55f.

kaiyit, 71f; (see also iron spear heads, 83).
külka, (sorcerer) fear of visitation by, 36.
külŋboi, 21, 44-45.
kangaroo, division of, according to kinship, 25-26; special method of preparation, 24.
känno, 42, 42f.
kärin, kumur, 67, 69, 91, 92.
kärritjämbül (red kangaroo), 24; fat of, 31.
kätjirk, kumur, 69, 72-73.
kauwäl, 12.
kingship, unknown in Australia, 11.
kinship, and regulation of conduct, 3, 3f; organisation, 3-4 (see also marriage and behaviour, adoption, avoidance); provision for old and sick, 4f; terms, used instead of personal names, 42f.
koŋ doit, 40.
koŋ wukündi, 40.
korroŋ (son-in-law), 45.
kula, 1.
kumur, sternum, front, hence direction; quarter in exchange cycle, 37, 65, 67-72.
kunabibbi ceremony, 32, 36.

labour, division of, 21, 25, 33.
luitjin (*Teredo*) as food, 15.
land ownership, 11-12.
law, order, and discipline, 11.
lippa lippa (wooden dugout canoe), 37, 57-60; methods of obtaining, 52, 59; part of Indonesian culture complex, 52f; title of owner, master of, 60.
local organisation in Arnhem Land, 5f; (see also social grouping; clan etc.).

Macassar voyagers, 71-72f, 82-83.
maipal, shellfish, 15.
Malay anchor, symbolic significance, 64-65f.

Malay culture, impact of, 6, (see also Indonesian influence); praus, in Arnhem Land, 6.
Malinowski, B., 1f, 8.
mälla, 9-11; defined as social group, 5f.
*mälli**, buy or purchase, pay, 51-52, 59-60.
*mälli**, shade, non-material manifestation, 64f, 89.
magical killing, fear of, 36.
Maräŋo, clan name, *dua* moiety, 41.
märdai'in, 36, 38-39, 46f.
märdai'in boi, (sacred), 46-47, 46f.
marr (power in ritual sense), 32f, 37, 41, 56f, 57, 64, 78, 78f, 80; in sacred (*yarḳomirri*) objects, 47-48; (see also *virtu*).
marriage and behaviour, regulated by kinship, 3f.
material culture, (conservatism), 7, 62-63; traits, local preference for special techniques, 63.
matrilineal society, 11f.
menstruation, tabus during, 21.
mesh baskets, 24, 32.
metal, skill in working, 9; (see also iron).
midday rest, 32.
Mildjiŋi clan, 87-90.
milmarr (gifts of food to potential mother-in-law), 43, 50.
-mirri†, adjectival suffix, with, having, (e.g. see *yarḳomirri*), 26, 42, 46-48.
miwait, ḳumur, 67, 69, 71.
moiety organisation or dual division, 10, 10f.
moiyoŋo, fish poison, (see *Tephrosia*).
mother's brother, (*ḳauwäl*), special relationship with sister's son, 12.
mourning, (see funeral rites).
muadäḳ, gerri (goods), 67, 68f, 73f, 88-89.
muadäḳ, ḳumur (exchange horizon), 67, 68f, 72, 73f, 92-93.
mundjutj (*Buchanania Muelleri*), desiccation of, 23.
Murngin, not name of tribe, 11f, 84.
muscular twitching (see *tobitj*).

nomadic people, 8, 17.
non-sacred category, *wäḳḳinŋu*, (opposed to *yarḳomirri*), 46-48.
Nonda Plum (*Parinarium Nonda*), storing of, 24.
ŋämbi, flint spear head, 65, 71, 87, 88.
ŋandi, mother, 26.
ŋäta, vegetable food, collective term, 33.
ŋillipidji, flint quarry, 87.
ŋulmarḳ ceremony, 32, 36.

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* This word has two distinct uses which can be distinguished only by context.

† *-miru*, without, lacking.

000 obligation, to reciprocate gifts, 4, 35, 43-44, 70.
obligations, social, defined by kinship, 21; towards mother-in-law, 42f, 42-43.
opposition, between groups, 14; moieties, 10, 10f; social groups, 5f, 13-14.
ordinary (non-sacred) category of goods, (*wäḳḳinŋu*), 80, 90.
organisation of work, 6, 19-20.
outrigger canoes (Cape York Peninsula), 52f.
ownership, of land, 11; of property, 1.

partner, in ceremonial exchange, 77-78.
patrilineal descent, 9; in clan, 12.
patrilineal society, 11, 11f.
pattern of behaviour, 3f, 4, 50f.
payment, of canoe craftsmen, 52.
Pellew, Sir Edward, Group, 7.
pigments, distribution of, 67.
poipuro, see stone implements.
polychrome, painting and patterns, 61; rights jealously guarded, 61.
power, (see *marr*).
prestige, increase of, by participation in ceremonial exchange, 79; loss of, by failure to reciprocate gifts received, 79.
primitive communism, 2-3, 53.
profane, see *wäḳḳinŋu* (in ritual sense).
property, borrowing of, 54; individual ownership, 54-55; ownership among aborigines, 1; rights of disposal, 54.
psychological attitudes, 38.
psychological value of possessions, 56-57f.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 2f, 69f.
rainfall, Arnhem Land, 15.
raḳai, (*Heleocharis sphacelata*) important staple food, 22.
räŋga, 23, 36; as representing spiritual power, 41; ornamentation of, 28f.
red kangaroo, (*ḳärritjämbäl*), 24.
red ochre, use in desiccation of fruit, 23.
removal of tabu, rite for, 48.
resources, 13-14, 14f, 15; (see Arnhem Land geographical features).

sacramental food, (not to be eaten or handled by profane), 23.
sagas, of culture heroes, 11.
seasonal, conditions, 8; influence, 15, 17; life, 14f.
segmentary organisation, 5f, 13.
single men's camp, 21.
shell adzes, 52f, 58.
shellfish, gathering of, 15, 33.
skill, recognised by special name, 57.

sleeping mats (of teatree bark), 33.
social life, relatives set apart during transition periods, 40.
social organisation, 9-14; atypical, 9; North-eastern Arnhem Land, 9.
social personality, 93.
social value, 31-35.
solidarity, 39.
solidarity, clan, 5f, 61; with clans, 5f.
sorcerers, see *ḵälḵa*.
spears, special factors in distribution, 56; (see also *ŋämbi* and *ḵaiyit*).
Stanner, W. E. H., 1-2f.
staple foods, 22.
stone axe, 85-87.
stone implements, source of special stone used for pounding, (*poipuro*), 71; (see also *ŋämbi*).
strangers, (*mulḵuro*), 50, 50f.
stringybark, (*Eucalyptus tetrodonta*), 58f, 59.
sugar bag, or wild honey, 30.
sun totem, 41.
supernatural sanctions, backed by clan ancestors, 11; laws enforced by, 11.

täbarr, bark parcels, 32.
tabu, brother-sister, 21; mother-in-law, 54; rite for removal of, 48; (see also *wuḵundi*).
tadoit, 38, 40-42, 44, 59.
täḵḵul ḵoŋ gurrupän, method of acquiring canoe, 52, 59.
tärrupoŋon, cloud pattern, 89-90.
teatree bark, for sleeping mats, 33.
technology, collecting of materials, 31; skill in, 7-9.
Tephrosia leptoclada (fish poison), 19.
theft, 54.
tjämbait, 32f, 35, 38, 41, 47.
tjarnbin, 32, 32f.
tjuḵarŋo (special relationship), 75-76, 92.
tjuḵurr, fat, applied to bright red feathers of Red-collared Lorikeet, 28f.
tobitj, muscular twitching, as portent, 27, 27f.
totemic affinity, 9, 10f; inheritance, 34, 63.
trade routes (see *duḵarr*).
traditional methods, part of culture pattern, 28; practices, regarded as part of culture pattern founded by totemic ancestors, 20.
Trobriand Islands, 1.
tribe, 11, 11f, (see also Murngin).
tribal organisation, absence of, 9-10.

unilateral obligations, towards certain relatives and strangers, 50, 50f.

600

value, ideas, recognition of, 6.
Vanderlin Island, visitors to, 7.
vegetable food, storage of, 23-24; burden of gathering, 39; collected by women, 30.
virtu, "value" in special aesthetic sense, 64, 80; (see also *marr*).
visitors, Indonesian (Macassar), 82-83, 88-89, 90.

wäkkälmändji, joking relationship, 54-55.
wäkkinŋu, ordinary, in ritual sense non-sacred, contrasted with *yarkomirri*, 46-48, 90.
wäkku, son woman speaking in clan relationship, 48.
wäŋärr (totemic ancestors), 11.
war-making expeditions, 66; group, 11.
wærnba, from the west, 64.
Warner, W. Lloyd, 84-86, 90; use of term Murngin, 11f.
wa'wa, kinship term, 35.
wawun (promised in marriage), 44.
wax, black, of native bee, use in spear making, 30.
wealth, 46; recognition of, 6.
weaving and spinning, hand, 8-9.
wetj, giving, in special ceremonial sense, 78-80, 92.
wood carvers, 9.
work, 33-34; drives and incentives, 34; of men, 26-27, 33; of women, 30, 39.
wukundi, tabu of special type, 40.

yam stick, made from ironwood, 24.
yarkomirri, (category of sacred things), 42, 46-48.
yindipulo, 12, 26.
yiritja moiety, 10f. (see also *dua*).

Figure 1

102 431 Map of Arnhem Land showing the area covered by the Ceremonial Exchange Cycle.

The chart which has been superimposed shows the orientation from the point of view of a man of Mildjiŋi clan of the Lower Glyde River area, but a similar orientation obtains for the whole of North Eastern Arnhem Land. Each horizon or *ḳumur* within the exchange cycle has its own characteristic goods or *gerri* which may be referred to, collectively, by the name of the quarter within the exchange cycle from which they come. Hence, *djalḳ*, which is actually the name of the sheath made from paperbark, in which flint spear heads are wrapped for protection, gives its name to "*ḳumur djalḳ*", the quarter of which these flint spear heads are the most characteristic and important *gerri*, and also to all other *gerri* received from that quarter.

Every man within the exchange cycle receives gifts of the appropriate kind from exchange partners of life-long standing, holds these gifts for a short time, and then passes them on to partners in another quarter in which they are appropriate *gerri*, in reciprocation of gifts which he has received from them and in discharge of an obligation incurred. This exchange cycle, which goes on continuously, provides the structure, the mechanism and the driving force, for an extensive circulation of goods which accompanies it, and therefore has an economic importance which is often masked by the ceremonial aspect.

Inset: Map of Australia with the territory of Arnhem Land indicated by shading.

[End Map 1(A)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

102
431
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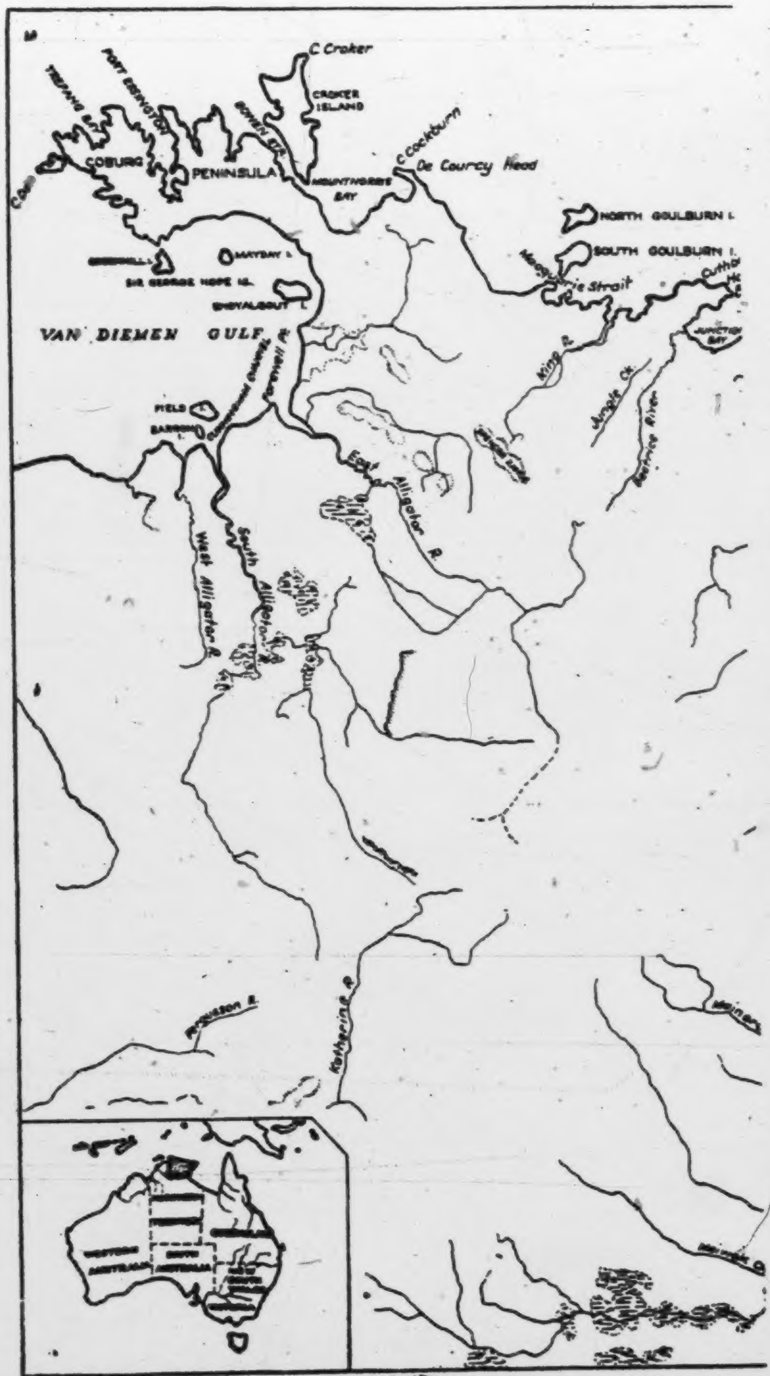
C Croker
CROKER ISLAND
TREPANG BAY
PORT ESSINGTON
BOWEN STR.
COBURG
PENINSULA
MOUNTNORRIS BAY
C Cockburn
De Courcy Head
NORTH GOULBURN I.
SOUTH GOULBURN I.
Macquarie Strait
MAYDAY I.
SIR GEORGE HOPE IS.
VAN DIEMEN GULF
Tomkinson Channel
Field
Barron I.
King R.
Junction Bay
Jungle Ck.
Liverpool River
East Alligator R.
West Alligator R.
South Alligator R.
Katherine R.
Ferguson R.

[End Map 1(B)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1949

OI17 Murngin OI17

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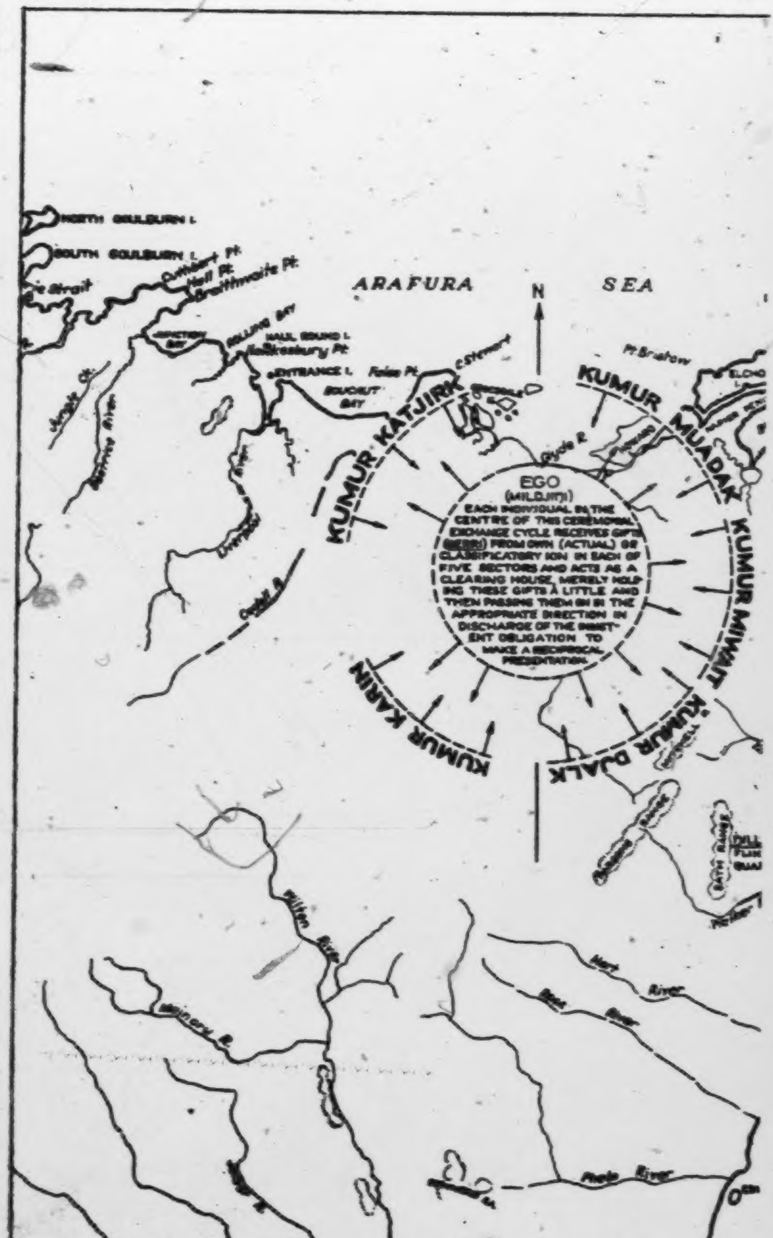
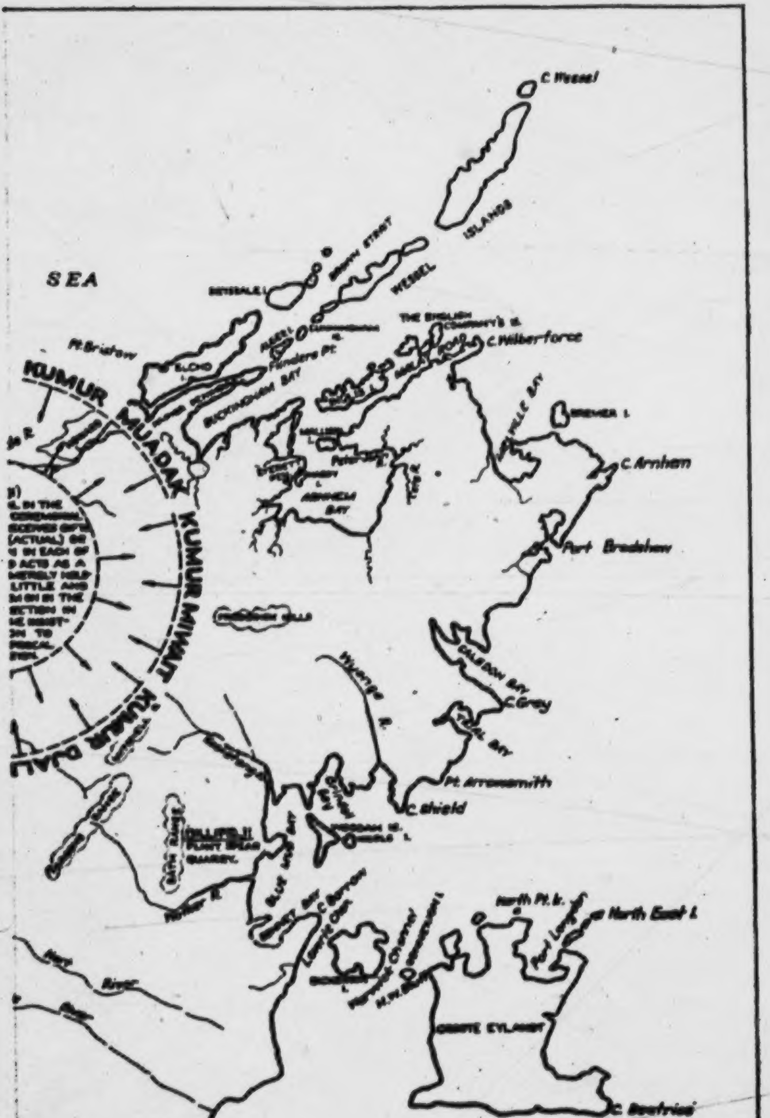
133
431


NORTH GOULBURN I.
SOUTH GOULBURN I.
Cuthbert Pt.
Hall Pt.
Braithwaite Pt.
Strait
JUNCTION BAY
ROLLING BAY
HALL SOUND I.
Hawkesbury Pt.
ENTRANCE I.
BOUCAUT BAY
False Pt.
C. Stewart
ARAFURA
SEA
N
Pt Bristow
Glyde R.
KUMUR KATJIRK
KUMUR
MUADAK
KUMUR MIWAIT
KUMUR DJALK
KUMUR KARIN
EGO
(MILDJIN)
EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THE CENTRE OF THIS CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE RECEIVES GIFTS (GERRI) FROM OWN (ACTUAL) OR CLASSIFICATORY KIN IN EACH OF FIVE SECTORS AND ACTS AS A CLEARING HOUSE, MERELY HOLDING THESE GIFTS A LITTLE AND THEN PASSING THEM ON IN THE APPROPRIATE DIRECTION IN DISCHARGE OF THE INSISTENT OBLIGATION TO MAKE A RECIPROCAL PRESENTATION.
Cadell R.
Wilton River
Mainoru R.
Rose River
Phelp River
LIMMEN BIGHT

[End Map 1 (C)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

102
133
431


C. Wessel
ISLANDS
WESSEL
SEA
Pt. Bristow
KUMUR
MUADAK
KUMUR MIWAIT
KUMUR DJAL
BUCKINGHAM BAY
Flinders Pt.
THE ENGLISH COMPANY'S IS.
C. Wilberforce
BREMER I.
ARNHEM BAY
C. Arnhem
Port Bradshaw
CALEDON BAY
C. Grey
TRIAL BAY
Pt. Arrowsmith
C. Shield
BLUE MUD BAY
QUARRY.
C. Barrow
North Pt.
North East I.
C. Beatrice
GULF OF
CARPENTARIA

[End Map 1(D)]

Figure 2

102 Map of Arnhem Land illustrating some of the characteristic "*gerri*"
431 of each sector of the ceremonial exchange cycle and the principal
439 paths by which these *gerri* reach a man of Mildjiŋi clan of the
Lower Glyde River area.

Boomerangs, coming from far to the south-west, as indicated by the arrows at lower left hand corner, may travel via either the Katherine or Wilton Rivers so that eventually they may enter North Central Arnhem Land from the west, across the Liverpool River, or from the south-east, by way of the Walker, Koolatong and Glyde Rivers.

Flint spear heads of a special type called "*ŋämbi*", which are made only at ŋillipidji near Blue Mud Bay, are shown wrapped neatly in paperbark sheaths called "*djalḳ*". Bundles of these spear heads enter from the *ḳumur djalḳ* quarter (south-east), or alternatively, by a more easterly route via the southern shorelines of Arnhem and Buckingham Bays. The typical way in which *gerri*, called collectively *mäthaḳäl* and *muadäḳ*, which were a heritage from the Macassar voyagers, reached Arnhem Land, and the route by which they entered the ceremonial exchange cycle is also shown. Numerous Macassar camp sites, at which shore stations were established, and where trepang was boiled and cured, are scattered along the northern coastline, notably at Arnhem Bay, Elcho Island and Miliŋimbi in the Crocodile Islands.

[End Map 2 (A)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

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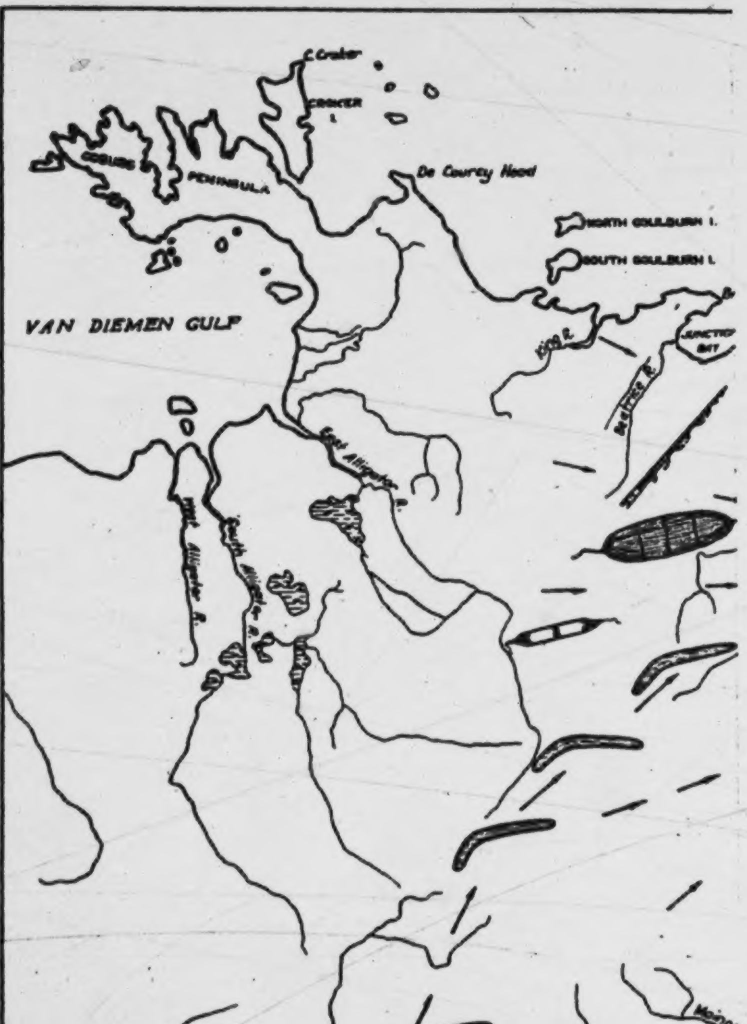
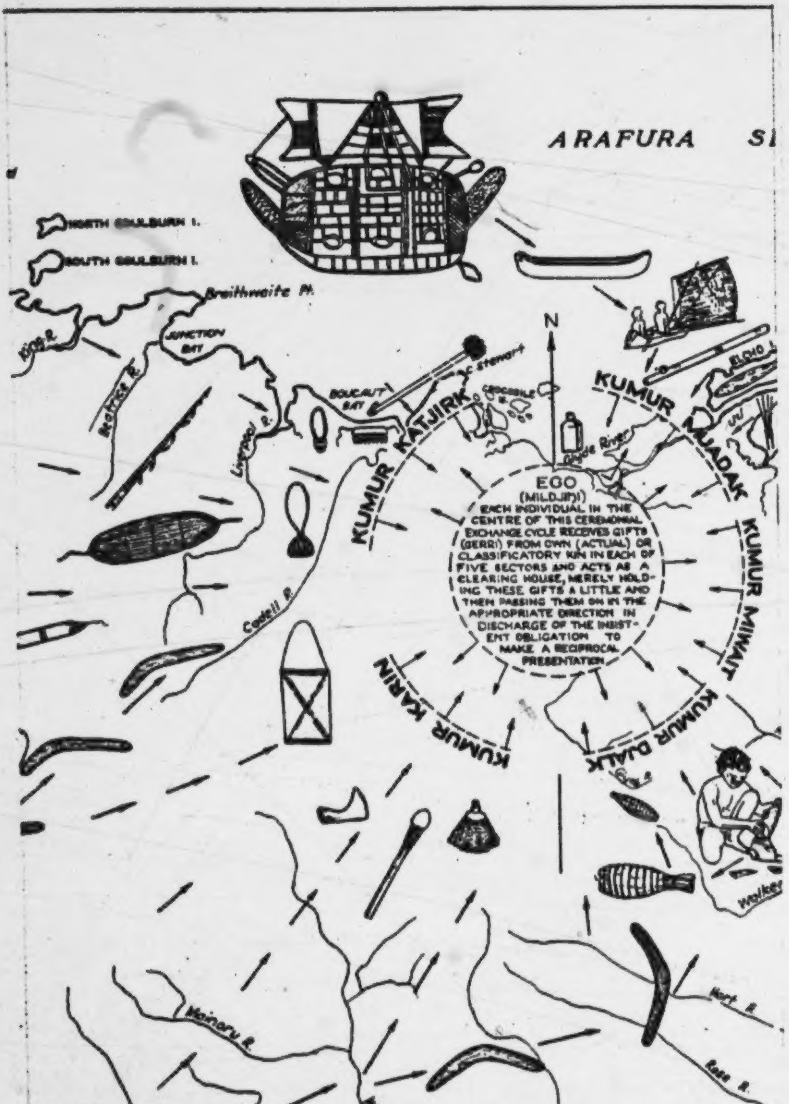

C. Croker
Croker I.
Coburg
Peninsula
De Courcy Head
North Goulburn I.
South Goulburn I.
Van Diemen Gulf
King R.
Junction Bay
East Alligator R.
West Alligator R.
South Alligator R.
Katherine R.
King R.

[End Map 2(B)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

102
431
439


ARAFURA S
NORTH GOULBURN I.
SOUTH GOULBURN I.
Braithwaite Pt.
King R.
JUNCTION BAY
Liverpool R.
BOUCAUT BAY
C. Stewart
CROCODILE IS.
N
Glyde River
ELCHO I.
KUMUR KATJIRK
KUMUR MAJADAK
KUMUR MIMAIT
KUMUR DJALK
KUMUR KARIN
EGO
(MILDJIPJI)
EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THE CENTRE OF THIS CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE CYCLE RECEIVES GIFTS (GERRI) FROM OWN (ACTUAL) OR CLASSIFICATORY KIN IN EACH OF FIVE SECTORS AND ACTS AS A CLEARING HOUSE, MERELY HOLDING THESE GIFTS A LITTLE AND THEN PASSING THEM ON IN THE APPROPRIATE DIRECTION IN DISCHARGE OF THE INSISTENT OBLIGATION TO MAKE A RECIPROCAL PRESENTATION
Cadell R.
Walker
Hart R.
Rose R.
Wainoru R.
Wilton R.
Phelp R.
Roper River
LIMMEN BIGHT

End Map 2(C)

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

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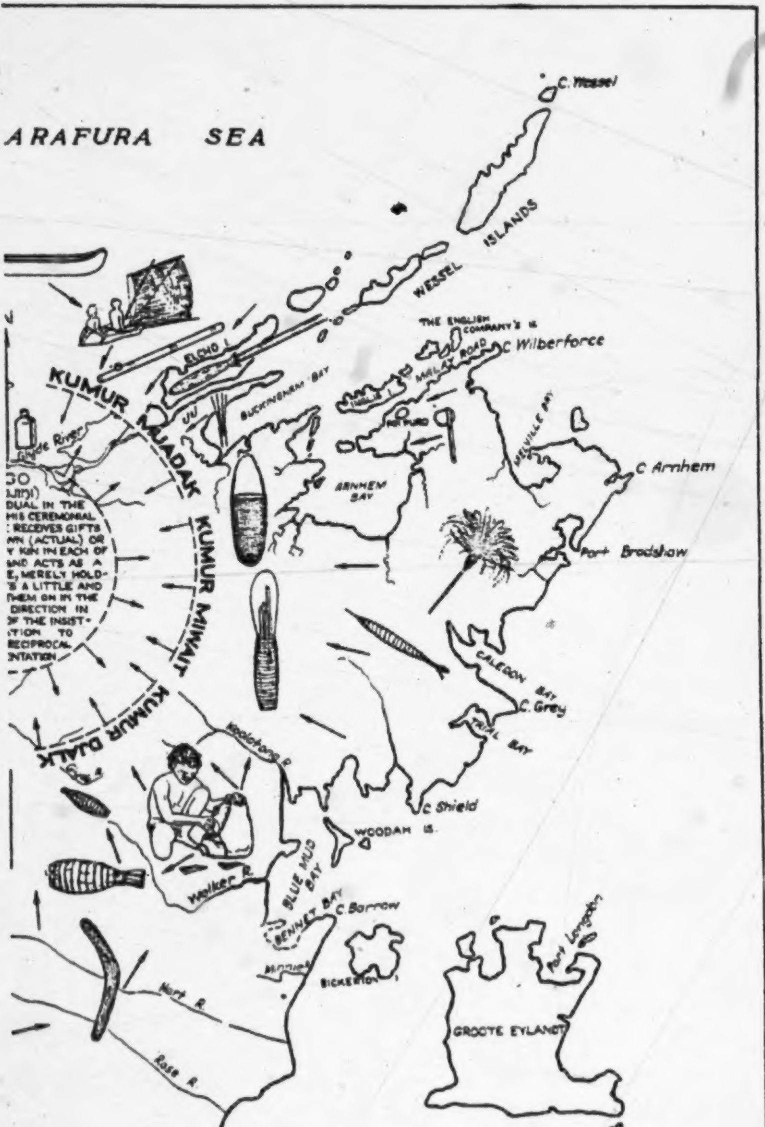
431
439


ARAFURA SEA
C. Wessel
WESSEL ISLANDS
THE ENGLISH COMPANY'S IS
MALAY ROAD
C Wilberforce
ELCHO
BUCKINGHAM BAY
KUMUR
MAIADAK
Glyde River
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: RECEIVES GIFTS
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AND ACTS AS A
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DIRECTION IN
OF THE INSIST-
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RECIPROCAL
NTATION
ARNHEM BAY
MELVILLE BAY
C Arnhem
Port Bradshaw
KUMUR MIWAIT
KUMUR DJALK
CALEDON BAY
C. Grey
TRIAL BAY
Koolatong R.
C Shield
WOODAH IS.
Walker R.
BLUE MUD BAY
BENNET BAY
C Barrow
BICKERTON I
Port Langdon
GROOTE EYLANDT
Hart R.
Rose R.
Phelp R.
EDWARD I
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
LIMMEN BIGHT
MARIA I

[End Map 2(D)]